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THE

THEOLOGICAL

WORKS

OF

ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

VOLUME IV.

CONTAINING

SEVEN SERMONS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS; A DEFENCE OF THE BLESSED TRINITY; AND TWELVE SERMONS ON THE CREED.

OXFORD,
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.
MDCCCXXX.

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SERMON LXXI.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

1 Tim. iv. 10.

——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

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THERE are two points of doctrine here plainly asserted by St. Paul, which I shall endeavour to explain and to apply: one, that God is the Saviour of all men; another, that he is peculiarly the Saviour of the faithful. [a] For the first,

God in many respects may truly be conceived and called *the Saviour of all men;* for the word *save* doth in a large acception denote the conferring any kind of good; as implying a removal of need, or indigence. Whence God *is the Saviour of all men,* as the universal preserver and upholder of all things in their being and natural state, as it is in the Psalm: *Thou, Lord, savest man and beast,* or, as the general benefactor, who *is good to all, and whose mercies are over all his works;* who *maketh his sun to rise upon the good and bad, rains upon the just and unjust, is kind* and benign even *to the ungrateful and evil:* or, as the common assistant, protector, and deliverer of all men, who in need or distress

Psal. xxxvi. 6. Old transl. and the LXX. σώσεις, or σώζεις. Psal. cxlv. 9. Matt. v. 45. Luke vi. 35.

[a] Θεοῦ γὰρ πολλῶν ὄντων, ἐφ' οἷς θαυμάζεται, οὐδὲν οὕτως, ὡς τὸ πάντας εὐεργετεῖν ἰδιώτατον. Naz. Orat. 26.

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have recourse unto him for succour and relief, according to what is said in the Psalms; *The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him. They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.*

Psal. ix. 9. cxlv. 18. cxlvi. 7, &c. cvii. 13, &c. lxviii. 19, 20.

In these kinds of senses, especially respecting natural and temporal good, it is manifest that *God is the Saviour of all men.* But that he is in this place termed such in a higher sense, with regard to mercies and blessings of a more excellent kind, and greater consequence, (to mercies and blessings of a spiritual nature, and relating to the eternal state of men,) may from several considerations appear.

1. For that according to apostolical use the words *Saviour, Save, Salvation,* are wont to bear an evangelical sense, relating to the benefits by our Lord Jesus Christ procured, purchased, and dispensed, concerning the future state of men.

2. For that questionless St. Paul doth here intend God to be *Saviour* of the faithful in this higher sense, and consequently he means him in the same sense (although not in the same degree and measure, or not altogether to the same effects and purposes) a *Saviour of all men.*

3. Because it is plain, that in other places of scripture, like and parallel to this, such a sense is designed. As where, in this very Epistle, we are enjoined *to pray for all men,* for this reason; *For,* saith St. Paul, *this is good and acceptable before God our Saviour, who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge* (or acknowledgment) *of the truth*; where σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, *the Saviour of us,* seems to denote the Saviour of *us* as *men,* (that

1 Tim. ii. 4.

interpretation best suiting with the argument St. Paul useth,) however it is expressed that God is, according to desire or intention, the Saviour of all men, in reference to their spiritual and eternal advantage; as willing that all men should embrace the gospel; which is further most evidently confirmed by the words immediately following; *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* SERM. LXXI.

4. Because, according to the tenor of scripture, and the analogy of Christian doctrine, St. Paul's assertion thus interpreted is true, as our subsequent Discourse may declare.

5. I might add, that *the living God* in our text may very well be understood and expounded to be our Lord Jesus himself; not only as partaking of the divine nature, but as exhibited in the gospel, the Word incarnate, who as such may seem commonly by St. Paul to be styled, *God our Saviour; God manifested in the flesh; God, that purchased the Church with his own blood; Christ, who is over all, God blessed for evermore.* However it from the premises is sufficiently apparent, that God's being *the Saviour of all men* doth relate unto our Saviour Jesus his undertakings and performances for the salvation of all men; since God in a sense evangelical is no otherwise said to save, than in concurrence with what Jesus did undertake and perform; than as designing, ordering, accepting, prosecuting, and accomplishing our Lord's performances; Jesus being the conduit through which all evangelical mercies and blessings are from God conveyed and dispensed to mankind. So that God being *the Saviour of mankind,* is either directly and immediately, or by

1 Tim. i. 1. ii. 3. 2 Tim. i. 10. Tit. ii. 10, 13. iii. 4. i. 3. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Acts xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. Eph. i. 3, 6.

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equivalence and in consequence, the same with Jesus being *the Saviour of all men.*

That our Lord Jesus is *the Saviour of all men;* or that the most signal of his saving performances do in their nature and their design respect all men, as meant for, as conducing and tending to all men's salvation, yea and as in their own nature (supposing men's due and possible concurrrence with them) effectually productive of their salvation; that, I say, this ancient catholic point of doctrine (the which we profess to believe, when with the church we say in the Nicene Creed—*Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven,* and the which particularly our church in its Catechism, in the Ministration of Baptism, and in the Communion, doth most evidently and expressly declare itself to embrace) is very true, many full and clear testimonies of scripture do shew, many reasons grounded on scripture do prove; the which we shall first touch, and then further both illustrate and enforce the truth, by declaring upon what accounts, or in what respects, our Lord is *the Saviour of all men;* as also by an application to practice, declarative of its usefulness and subserviency to the purposes of piety. For immediate testimonies:

1. Jesus is called the *Saviour* of the world; who was sent and came into the world to save the world; whose chief performances were designed and directed

John iv. 42. to the salvation of the world; *We have heard and known,* said the men of Samaria, *that this is truly*

1 John iv. 14. *the Saviour of the world, the Christ. We have seen and testified,* saith St. John, *that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world,* (that

John i. 10. *world,* of which it is said, *He was in the world, and*

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the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.) And, *God sent his Son into the world, not to judge* (or *not to condemn*) *the world, but that the world by him should be saved,* (that *world,* whereof a great part he in effect would both judge and condemn for unbelief and disobedience, he did come primarily upon intent to save.) And, *The bread which I shall give is,* saith he, *my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* And, *Behold,* said the Baptist, *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.* And, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their offences,* saith St. Paul, *to the world,* which otherwise he expresseth by τὰ πάντα, *by him to reconcile all things unto himself.* And, *He is a propitiation not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world,* (*the whole world,* in contradistinction from all Christians, to whom St. John speaketh in that place of his catholic Epistle; that κόσμος ὅλος, of which he saith in that same Epistle, κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται, *the whole world lieth in wickedness.*) In all which places that the *world* according to its ordinary acception (and as every man would take it at first hearing) doth signify the whole community of mankind, comprehending men of all sorts and qualities, good and bad, believers and infidels, (not in a new, unusual sense, any special restrained world of some persons, particularly regarded or qualified,) will, I suppose, easily appear to him, who shall without prejudice or partiality attend to the common use thereof in scripture, especially in St. John, who most frequently applieth it as to this, so to other cases or matters.

John iii. 17. xii. 47. John v. 22. Acts x. 42. xvii. 31. Rom. xiv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 10. John vi. 51. John i. 29. 2 Cor. v. 19. Coloss. i. 20. 1 John ii. 2. 1 John v. 19.

2. The object of our Saviour's undertakings and

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intentions is described by qualities and circumstances agreeing unto all men. All the sons of Adam are by disobedience in a lost condition, (lost in error and sin, lost in guilt and condemnation, lost in trouble and misery;) and, *The Son of man*, saith he himself, *came to save, τὸ ἀπολωλὸς, that which was lost*, (or whatever was lost.) *All men have sinned*, saith St. Paul, *and are fallen short of the glory of God;* and, *It is a faithful saying*, saith the same apostle, *and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. God commended his love to us, that we being yet sinners Christ died for us.* All men naturally are weak and wicked; are in a state of alienation and enmity toward God: and, *Even when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly: When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: Christ once suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous.* All men have souls and lives exposed to misery and ruin: and, *The Son of man*, so he assures us, *came not to destroy, but to save the souls* (or *lives*) *of men.* Those propositions in form, respecting an indefinite object, are according to vulgar use equipollent to those, wherein the object is expressed universally. However,

Matt. xviii. 11.

Rom. iii. 23.

1 Tim. i. 15.

Rom. v. 8. Ephes. ii. 1, &c.

Rom. v. 6, 10.

1 Pet. iii. 18.

Luke ix. 56.

3. They are interpreted by others, expressed in terms as general and comprehensive as can be; such as these texts contain: *The living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful,* (of all men universally, not only of the faithful, though chiefly of them.) *God our Saviour would have all men to be saved; He is the mediator of God and men, who gave himself a ransom for all men; God*

1 Tim. iv. 10.

1 Tim. ii. 4, 5, 6.

Rom. xi. 32.

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hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. The love of Christ constraineth us, judging this, that if one died for all, then are all dead; and he died for all, that they who live may not live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again. The saving grace of God hath appeared to all men, (or the grace of God, which is saving to all men, hath appeared, ἐπεφάνη ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις.) *He tasted death* (ὑπὲρ παντὸς) *for every man. He is the true light, that enlighteneth every man coming into the world.* Which propositions do sufficiently determine the extent of our Saviour's saving performances.

2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Tit. ii. 11. Heb. ii. 9. 10. John i. 9.

4. Further yet, to exclude any limitation or diminution of these so general terms, (at least to exclude any limitation in regard to all the members of the visible church, which are or have been incorporated thereinto,) it is expressed, that our Saviour's undertakings did respect even those, who (by their own default) might lose the benefit of them, and who in effect should not be saved. For, of those false teachers, who introduced *pernicious heresies*, it is said, that *they denied the Lord who bought them*[b]. And St. Paul implies, that by scandalous example *a weak brother, for whom Christ died,* being induced to sin, might be *destroyed. And by thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?* And, *Do not,* saith he again, *by thy eating destroy him, for whom Christ died.* And the apostle to the Hebrews signifies concerning apostates, that they do *trample upon the Son of God, and pollute the blood of Christ, by which they are sanctified.*

2 Pet. ii. 1. 1 Cor. viii. 11. Rom. xiv. 15. Heb. x. 29.

[b] Væ illis, qui auctorem propriæ salutis negaverunt. *Ambr. Ps.* xxxix.

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5. The supposition thereof is the ground of duty, and an aggravation of sin.

Thus doth the holy scripture in terms very direct and express declare this truth, indeed so clearly and fully, that scarce any other point of Christian doctrine can allege more ample or plain testimony of scripture for it; whence it is wonderful, that any pretending reverence to scripture should dare (upon consequences of their own devising) to question it; and many reasons confirming the same may be deduced thence.

1. [c]The impulsive cause, which moved God to design the sending our Lord for to undertake what he did, is expressed to be philanthropy, or love to mankind: *But*, saith St. Paul, *when the kindness and love of God our Saviour unto man appeared—according to his mercy he saved us. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son. God hereby commends his love unto us, that we as yet being sinners, Christ died for us.* It was not a particular fondness of affection, (such whereof no particular ground can be assigned or imagined,) but an universal (infinitely rich and abundant) goodness, mercy, and pity toward this eminent part of his creation, sunk into distress and lamentable wretchedness, which induced God to send his Son for the redemption of mankind.

Tit. iii. 4. Ἡ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ.
John iii. 16. Rom. v. 8. Ephes. ii. 4.

2. God declares himself impartial (most particularly) in this case; that as all men in regard to him stand alike related, and are in the same condition, so he proceeds with indifferent affection, and upon the same terms with all. He is equally the Lord

[c] Greg. Naz. saith of Julian, διὰ τοῦτο μισήσας Χριστὸν, ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ σέσωστο. Athan. Orat. 32.

and Maker of all men; and all men are equally involved in guilt, and exposed to ruin; upon which grounds St. Paul inferreth, that as to God's regard of man's salvation, there is no difference between Jews and Greeks; and by parity of reason there can be none between any other sorts of persons, antecedently to God's merciful intentions. *There is,* saith he, *no respect of persons with God,* (as to preparing the capacities and means, to propounding the terms and conditions of salvation, for about these he discourses;) for, *Is he,* saith the apostle, assigning the reason of that assertion, *the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles? No: There is no difference,* saith he, *of Jew and Greek, for there is the same Lord of all, being rich* (rich in mercy and bounty) *unto all that call upon him;* that is by consequence simply unto all; for St. Paul implies, that God therefore provided that all men should have the means of calling upon him imparted to them; for that, *how should they call upon him without faith?* and *how should they believe without preachers?* and *how should there be preachers, if they were not sent?* Whence he infers (against the sense of those Jews with whom he disputes) that it was necessary that the apostles should have a commission to preach unto all. And, *The righteousness of God by the faith of Christ is manifested unto all, and over all that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:* the relation of God is the same to all men, (He *is the God and Lord of all;*) the state and need of all men are the same; there is therefore no difference, excepting that consequent one, which compliance or noncompliance with the

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Rom. ii. 11.

Rom. iii. 29.

Rom. x. 12.

Rom. iii. 22, 23.

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conditions offered unto all doth induce. It is true in this respect, what the Wise Man saith, ὁ πάντων
Wisd. vi. 7. δεσπότης ὁμοίως προνοεῖ περὶ πάντων· *He*, that is Lord of all, *careth* (or provideth) *for all alike;* and what Clemens Alexandrinus says, as to this particular, *All things lie equally for all from God; so that no man can complain of him*[d]; as partial to some, and deficient to others.

3. We may observe, that the undertakings and performances of *our Lord* are for nature and extent compared with those of Adam, (who was τύπος τοῦ
Rom. v. 14. μέλλοντος, *a type of him that was to come;*) as Adam, being a representative of mankind, did by his transgression involve all men in guilt, and subject them to condemnation; provoked God's wrath, and drew the effects thereof upon us; brought all men under the slavery of sin, and necessity of death; so was *our Lord* the *proxy* of mankind, and by his performances in our behalf did undo for our advantage what the former did to our prejudice; by his entire obedience expiating the common guilt, suspending the fatal sentence, pacifying God's wrath, reducing righteousness, and restoring life to all that would embrace them; so doth St. Paul at large (in the 5th chapter of his Epistle to the Romans) propound and prosecute the comparison; closing his discourse thus:
Rom. v. 18. *Therefore as by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.* As guilt, wrath, and death forementioned, were the fruits of what Adam did, falling upon all; so pardon, grace, and life, were

[d] Πᾶσι πάντα ἴσα κεῖται παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἐστὶν αὐτὸς ἀμεμφής. Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. p. 301.

(in design) the effects of what *our Saviour* performed relating unto all. Yea, the same comparison St. Paul seems to intimate in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, where he saith, that *if one died for all, then are all men dead;* that is, Christ's dying for all men, implies all men in a state of condemnation and subjection to death; and that inference supposes the performances of the *first* and *second* Adam to be in their nature and primary effects co-extended and commensurate. The same St. Paul seemeth in express terms to say, *All men have sinned, and are fallen short* (or *are destitute*) *of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace* (or *favour*) *by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* (All men are justified, that is, according to God's favourable intention and design.) Yea, the very reason why God permitted sin and death to prevail so universally is intimated to be his design of extending a capacity of righteousness and life unto all; so St. Paul tells us: God hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. And particularly, that by virtue of Christ's performances death is abolished, and immortality is conferred upon all men, St. Paul most expressly teacheth us; *For,* saith he, *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

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2 Cor. v. 14.

Rom. iii. 23, 24.

Rom. xi. 32.

1 Cor. xv. 22. 2 Tim. i. 10. Rom. vi. 23.

I observe that Prosper (an eager disputant about points allied to this) several times confesseth, [c] that Christ may be most rightly affirmed to have been crucified for the redemption of the whole world,

[c] Cum itaque rectissime dicatur Salvator pro totius mundi redemptione crucifixus, propter veram naturæ humanæ susceptionem, et propter communem in primo homine omnium perditionem, &c. *Prosp. ad Gal.* c. 9.

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especially upon two accounts, for his true susception of human nature, and for the common perdition of all men in the first man: we have touched the latter; let us add, that

4. Our Saviour assuming our nature, and partaking of our flesh, *being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man*; yea, endued with the passions and infirmities of man's nature, exposed to the tribulations and inconveniences of man's life, did thereby ally himself, and put on a fraternal relation unto all men. *Forasmuch*, saith the apostle to the Hebrews, *as children* (the children he means of the same father, or brethren; as the tenor of his discourse makes evident) are *partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same*; that is, graciously designing to become a brother to the children of men, he assumed all that was proper to man's nature. *God*, saith St. Paul, made πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, *the whole nation or race of men, dwelling upon the face of the earth, of one blood*; and of that one blood our Saviour was pleased to take part, entitling us thereby to a consanguinity with him[f]; and it was a title of his, which he seemed to affect and delight in, *the Son of man*. He being such did sanctify our nature, by the closest conjunction thereof to the divine nature, and rendering it more than a temple of the Divinity; he dignified it, and (as that apostle intimateth) advanced it above the angelical nature by an alliance to God himself; he thereby not only became qualified to mediate between God and man, and capable

Phil. ii. 7. Heb. iv. 15. ii. 17. v. 2. Gal. iv. 4. Heb. ii. 14, 11, 12, 16. Acts xvii. 26. Heb. ii. 11. Heb. ii. 7, 16. 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[f] Ἡ πρόσληψις τῆς σαρκὸς οὐκ ἐδούλου τὸν λόγον φύσει Κύριον ὄντα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἐλευθέρωσις ἦν ἡ γινομένη παρὰ τοῦ λόγου πάσης ἀνθρωπότητος, &c. Athan. c. Arr. Orat. iii. p. 385.

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to transact that great business of man's salvation; but was engaged, and in a manner obliged to do it; for as he was a man, he surely was endued with the best of human affections, universal charity and compassion, which would excite him to promote the welfare of all; as he was *a man*, he was subject to the common law of humanity, which obliges to endeavour the common benefit of men. As he was *a brother* in relation, so he could not, he would not be otherwise in affection; he is not to be conceived deficient in performance of the offices suitable to that condition. That good-will which he requires us to bear toward all men indifferently, good and bad, friends and enemies, he questionless did bear himself in the highest degree, and to the utmost extent; the general beneficence, which in his conversation and practice he did express, doth signify how large his desires and intentions were in regard to the welfare of men; so that we may thence well aver with St. Ambrose: *Incarnationis Dei mysterium est universæ salus creaturæ; The mystery of God's incarnation doth respect the salvation of all mankind*, according to his desire and design.

Matt. v. 44. Gal. vi. 10. Acts x. 38.

Ambr. de Parad. 8.

5. We are taught that *our Lord* hath by his *saving* performances acquired a rightful propriety in, and a title of dominion over all men living [g]; to him is committed the governance and protection of all mankind, as the reward of what he did and suffered for its sake. *He is* called *the Lord of all men*; and *the head of every man*. It is said that *all things by his Father are given into his hand*,

Rev. xvii. 14.

Acts x. 36. 1 Cor. xi. 3. Mat. xxviii. 18. xi. 27. John iii. 35. xiii. 3.

g Ἄνθρωπον αὐτὸν ποιήσας ὁ Πατὴρ οὐχ ἁπλῶς ἐποίησεν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ κυριεύσαι πάντων αὐτὸν, καὶ ἁγιάζειν πάντας διὰ τοῦ χρίσματος πεποίηκεν. Ath. Orat. 3. in Arr. 385.

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and *put under his feet;* that *power is given him over all flesh;* that *all authority is given him in heaven and earth; all judgment is committed to him.* Which privileges, rights, dignities, are declared to have been procured by the virtue of his saving performances, and purchased by the price of his blood. *For, to this end,* saith St. Paul, *Christ both died and rose again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living,* (or might exercise lordship over both the dead and living, ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ:) and, *We are not our own,* (saith he again,) *we are bought with a price:* and, *We see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God he might taste death for every man,* (or, for the suffering of death, that by God's grace he might taste death for every man, crowned with glory and honour; for there seems to be such a trajection in the words:) and, *He was obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross; therefore hath God exalted him, and given him a name above every name.* Subjection then and redemption, as they have one ground, so they are implied to have the same extent; as every one must call Christ *Lord,* so he may call him *Saviour;* therefore his *Lord,* because his *Saviour.* And since Christ hath got an authority over all men, a propriety in every man; since he hath undertaken to govern and protect the world, he questionless, as a prince of incomparable benignity and clemency, doth seriously intend and desire the best welfare of all his people; it surely cannot be a small benefit to the community of men, that they are his subjects; the objects of his princely care, and of his mercy.——Κήδεται τῶν συμ-

Heb. ii. 8. i. 2. John xvii. 2. v. 22. Phil. ii. 9. Psal. cx. 7. Rom. xiv. 9. 1 Cor. vi. 20. Heb. ii. 9. Phil. ii. 8, 9. Rev. v. 9, 12. Clem. Strom. vii. p. 505.

πάντων, ὅπερ καὶ καθήκει καὶ κυρίῳ πάντων γενομένῳ· σωτὴρ γάρ ἐστιν, οὐχὶ τῶν μὲν, τῶν δ' οὔ. *He taketh care of all, which doth become him that is Lord of all; for that he is indifferently the Saviour of all,* saith Clem. Alexand. SERM. LXXI.

6. We are commanded to *pray, intercede,* and *give thanks* (indifferently) *for all men,* even for heathens and persecutors; as for the objects of God's benevolent affection; whom *he would have to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of his truth;* expressing our charity in conformity to the unconfined goodness of God. Very good reason (argues St. Chrysostom) there is why we should pray for all men; for if God doth will the salvation of all men, we, in imitation of him, should will the same; and, if we desire it, we should pray for it[h]. Upon which score the catholic church hath constantly and carefully observed this precept; so the learned writer *de Vocatione Gentium* assures us: [i] *Which law of supplication,* saith he, *the devotion of all priests and of all the faithful people doth so observe, that there is no part of the world, in which such prayers are not solemnized by the Christian people. The church of God doth therefore supplicate, not only for the saints, and the regenerate in Christ, but also for all infidels, and enemies of the cross of* [1] Tim. ii. 1, 4.

[h] Μιμοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ——εἰ πάντας θέλει σωθῆναι, εἰκότως ὑπὲρ πάντων δεῖ εὔχεσθαι· εἰ πάντας αὐτὸς ἐθελήσε σωθῆναι, θέλε καὶ σύ· εἰ δὲ θέλεις, εὔχου. Chrysost.

[i] Quam legem supplicationis ita omnium sacerdotum, et omnium fidelium devotio, concorditer tenet, ut nulla pars mundi sit, in qua hujusmodi orationes non celebrentur a populis Christianis. Supplicat ergo ubique ecclesia Dei non solum pro sanctis et in Christo jam regeneratis, sed etiam pro omnibus infidelibus, et inimicis crucis Christi, &c.

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Christ; for all idolaters, all persecutors, all Jews, heretics, and schismatics. And Prosper himself: [k] *Setting aside,* saith he, *that distinction, which the divine knowledge contains within the secret of his justice, it is most sincerely to be believed and professed, that God wills that all men shall be saved; since the apostle, whose sentence that is, doth most solicitously enjoin that which is in all the churches most piously observed, that God should be implored for all men.* So doth he attest the common practice, and declare the ground thereof.

7. For which practice, and for the confirmation of its ground, (God's serious willingness and desire that men should be saved,) we have the pattern of our *Lord* himself praying to his *Father* for the pardon of the worst of men, his murderers; which as it demonstrated his charity toward them, so it argues that he was their *Saviour*, for that otherwise he knew they could not be in any capacity of having pardon. His praying for them implies the possibility of their receiving forgiveness; and such a possibility doth presuppose a disposition in God to grant it, and consequently a satisfaction provided, such as God requires and accepts, and which shall avail to their benefit, if toward the application thereof they perform their parts.

8. Indeed it is not easy to conceive, how we can heartily pray for pardon, or for any other blessing,

[k] Remota ergo discretione, quam divina scientia intra secretum justitiæ suæ continet, sincerissime credendum atque profitendum est Deum velle, ut omnes homines salvi fiant; siquidem apostolus, cujus ista sententia est, solicitissime præcipit quod in omnibus ecclesiis piissime custoditur, ut Deo pro omnibus hominibus suppliceretur. *Pros. ad Obj. Vincent.* 2.

either for ourselves or for others, without supposing Christ to be *our* Saviour and *theirs*; without supposing God placable and well affected towards us and them in Christ, upon the account of his performances and sufferings in our and their behalf. We are to offer up all our devotions in the name of Christ, and for his sake must implore all mercies and blessings from God; which how can we do seriously and with faith, if we may reasonably question whether Christ's merits do respect us, and consequently whether they can be available in our behalf? *I will,* saith St. Paul, *that men should pray in every place, lifting up pure hands, without wrath or doubting:* which precept how can any man observe; how can any man pray with calmness and confidence of mind, who is not assured that Christ is his Saviour, or that God for Christ's sake is disposed to grant his requests? But this point we may be obliged to prosecute somewhat further in the application. SERM. LXXI. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

9. Either our Saviour's performances do respect all men, or some men (the far greatest part of men) do stand upon no other terms, than those of the first creation, or rather of the subsequent lapse and condemnation; being subject to an extremely rigorous law, and an infallibly certain guilt, and consequently to inevitable punishment; being utterly secluded from all capacity of mercy, and having no place of repentance left unto them, (the place of repentance being a most signal part of Christ's purchase;) so that if any such man should, according to the proportion of his light and ability, perform what is agreeable to God's law, doing what is possible to him (this may be supposed, for what is possible to a man he may do, what is possible is possible) in order to his salva- Acts v. 31. Luke xxiv. 47.

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tion, he notwithstanding should be incapable of any mercy, favour, or acceptance. But, beside that it is expressly said, that *God* did *shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all;* and that we are plainly enough informed, that our Lord did reverse the first fatal sentence, and hath, as the mediator between God and man, evacuated all former covenants by establishing a new one, (for if any former *covenant had been good, there had been no place sought for a new one,* as the apostle to the Hebrews discourseth)—besides these considerations, I say, and beside that such suppositions do not well suit to the nature of God, and do not well consist with the tenor of his providence; God positively and vehemently disclaimeth this rigour of proceeding; he both under law and gospel declares himself ready to admit any man's repentance; yea, earnestly invites all men thereto; yea, grievously explains and expostulates with men for not repenting; yea, not only says it, but swears it by his own life, that he desires any wicked man should do it; he strongly asserts, he earnestly inculcates, he loudly proclaims to all his readiness to pardon, and his delight in shewing mercy; the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering. He declares that he will exact an account of men, according to proportion, answerable to their willingness to do what they could; and to the improvements of those talents (those measures of light and strength) which they had, or might have had; that whoever is ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς, faithful in using the smallest power, shall be accepted and rewarded. He represents himself impartial in his judgment and acceptance of men's persons and performances; any man, in any nation, his

Rom. xi. 32.

Heb. viii. 7.

Acts xvii. 30.

Ezek. xviii.

Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Isa. lv. 3, 7. Mic. vii. 8. Rom. ii. 4.

2 Cor. viii. 12. Matt. xxv. 25. Luke xix. 17. xvi. 10.

Acts x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 17.

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sincere, though imperfect, piety and righteousness being acceptable to him: the final ruin of men is not imputed to any antecedent defect lying in man's state, or God's will, to no obstacle on God's part, nor incapacity on the part of man, but wholly to man's blameable neglect, or wilful abuse of the means conducible to his salvation: no want of mercy in God, or virtue in the passion of our Lord, are to be mentioned or thought of; infidelity (formal or interpretative) and obstinate impenitency, disappointing God's merciful intentions, and frustrating our Lord's saving performances and endeavours, are the sole banes of mankind; *Here*, saith our Lord, *is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* And, *I speak these things, that ye might be saved; but ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* And, *How often have I willed to gather thy children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!* Of the Pharisees and lawyers our Saviour said, that *they defeated the counsel of God toward themselves*, (ἠθέτησαν τὴν βουλὴν Θεοῦ εἰς ἑαυτούς,) the counsel of God, who designed to bring them to repentance by the instruction and exhortation of St. John the Baptist. Our Saviour invited many to the participation of the gospel, (*that great feast of fat things to all people*, as the prophet Isaiah calleth it;) but they would not come, saith the text: he iterated his message, but they carelessly neglecting it (ἀμελήσαντες) *went away, one to his farm, another to his merchandise, and the rest took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.* The *sower* (our *Lord*) did sow in the *field* (*the world*)

John iii. 19. John v. 34, 40. Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke vii. 30. Isa. xxv. 6. Matt. xxii. 3, 5. Matt. xiii. 37, 38.

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the good seed of heavenly truth; but some would not admit it into their heads or hearts; from others temptation bare it away; in others worldly cares and desires choked it; our Lord spake the most convincing words, such as no man ever spake, such as drew *publicans* and *harlots* into the kingdom of heaven; he performed most astonishing works, such as never the like were done, which were sufficient to convert Tyre and Sidon, yea to have preserved Sodom, but without effect; such were the invincible obstinacy, the gross stupidity, the corrupt prejudices, and perverse affections of his auditors and spectators, upon which causes our Lord chargeth the inefficacy and unsuccessfulness of his endeavours for their salvation. So doth St. Stephen call the Jews, unto whom the gospel was offered, *hard-necked, uncircumcised in heart and ears*; such as *did always resist the Holy Spirit.* St. Paul gives the same character of them, and assigns the same cause of their rejecting the gospel. And of the Jews of Antioch it is said, that they did *thrust away the word of salvation, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life,* (that is, disdaining to embrace the overture of everlasting life made unto them.) And, *Despisest thou the riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; being ignorant that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* So St. Paul expostulates with the incredulous Jew. And, *How,* saith the apostle to the Hebrews, *shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* So do our Lord and his apostles state the reason of men's miscarrying in this great affair; signifying all requisite care and provision to be made on God's part for their salva-

John vii. 46. xv. 22, 24. ix. 32. Matt. xxi. 31. John vii. 31. v. 44. xii. 43. Luke xvi. 14. Matt. xiii. 13. xxiii. 14. Acts vii. 51. xxviii. 26. Acts xiii. 46. Rom. ii. 4. Heb. ii. 3.

tion; and imputing the obstruction solely to their voluntary default of compliance with God in his conduct and management thereof. SERM. LXXI.

Neither are the dealings and declarations of God toward those who lived under the law and prophets impertinent to this purpose; they are applicable upon consideration of parity in reason, or likeness in case.

What remonstrances concerning the gentleness, kindness, and equity of his dealings, what exprobrations of their stubbornness and stupidity God did anciently make to Israel under that particular dispensation, (which yet in tendency and in representation may be deemed general,) the same he might now use toward all mankind, under this *universal economy*, wherein God hath given to his *Son, the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession*; whereby *all the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of the Lord, and his Christ*; which hath erected an unconfined kingdom of grace; to which all men in design and of right are subject; in respect to which every nation is in obligation and duty become the people of God. *What*, said *God* to them, *could I have done more to my vineyard than I have done? Wherefore, when I looked for grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help. I have spread out my hands all the day long to a rebellious and gainsaying people. I spake unto you rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; I called, but ye answered not; I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my*

Psal. ii. 8. Rev. xi. 15.

Isa. v. 4.

Hos. xiii. 9.

Isa. lxv. 2. Rom. x. 21. Jer. vii. 13.

Prov. i. 24, 29.

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counsel, and would none of my reproof. When I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. And, *Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken; behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it. They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear; yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit.* Which passages, with many others of the like importance that occur, do imply the large extent of God's merciful intentions, and the competency of the means which God affords for the salvation of men; that he wants no affection or inclination to save them; that he neglects no means proper for effecting it; that he draws them into the way leading thither by serious and earnest invitation, directs them by needful light and instruction, excites them by powerful arguments and persuasions; and, as St. Ambrose speaketh, *Quod in Deo fuit, ostendit omnibus, quod omnes voluit liberare: God shewed to all, that what was in him, he did will to deliver* (or save) *all men.* Whence he may truly and properly be called the Benefactor and Saviour, even of those, who by their wilful malice or neglect do not obtain salvation[h]. For in respect to the same favours, which are exhibited and tendered to them, he is the Saviour of those, who by hearkening to God's call, and complying with God's design; by well using the means

Isa. lxv. 12. lxvi. 4. Ezek. xii. 2. Jer. vi. 10.

Zech. vii. 11, 12.

De Parad. 8.

[h]—ἀπολογοῦμενος μετὰ ἀποδείξεως ὅτι πάντα τὰ εἰς αὐτὸν ἥκοντα ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῶν κριομένων πεποίηκεν—. Bas. in Ps. vii.

vouchsafed, and performing the conditions required, do finally attain salvation. SERM. LXXI.

If it be said that these transactions do refer only to God's own people, or to those only, unto whom God pleased to dispense especial revelations of truth and overtures of mercy; that we therefore cannot thence infer any thing concerning the general extent of God's design, or the virtue of Christ's performances in respect to all mankind; we may to this suggestion rejoin, that by observing the manner of God's proceedings toward them, unto whom he openly declareth his mind and will, we may reasonably collect how he standeth affected toward others, and by what rules, or upon what accounts, he dealeth with them; taking in the analogy of reason, and parity or disparity of the case. As to God's affection, it is the same every where, agreeable to that nature, which inclineth him to be *good to all, and merciful over all his creatures,* as the Psalmist tells us; unto which disposition his providence yields attestation; for οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον ἀφῆκεν ἑαυτὸν, ἀγαθοποιῶν, *he did not leave himself without testimony, doing good to all,* as St. Paul tells us; although he doth not dispense his favours in the same method, or discover his meaning by the same light, or call all men to him with the same voice and language. Psal. cxlv. 9. Acts xiv. 17.

Neither was mankind ever left destitute of that *divine grace,* which, as the good writer *de Vocatione Gentium* saith, *never denied itself to any ages, with the same virtue, in different measure, with an unchangeable counsel, and multiform operation*[1]. So in one place; and in another,

[1] Gratia Dei nullis seculis se negavit, virtute una, quantitate diversa, concilio incommutabili, opere multiformi. ii. 5.

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[k] *There was always,* saith he, *dispensed to all men a certain measure of instruction from above, which, although it came from a more occult and sparing grace, did yet suffice to some for remedy, to all for testimony.*

Comparing the different states of men, we may substitute with St. Paul[l], for the *law of revelation* engraved upon *tables,* the *law of nature* written in men's *hearts;* for *prophetical instructions,* the *dictates of reason;* for *audible* admonitions and reproofs, *secret* whispers of grace and checks of conscience; for *extraordinary* instances of divine power,
Acts xiv. 17. the *ordinary* works of the creation, (*by which God's eternal divinity and power are discernible;*) for the *special* and occasional influences of providence, the *common* and continual expressions of divine beneficence; then allowing for the disparity (as to measure of evidence and efficacy) in these things; and as to the rest, the case is the same. If one part hath means more clear and forcible, yet those which are granted to the other are not void of use
Acts xvii. 27. or virtue; by them all men in all places *may seek God, if haply they may feel him and find him;*
Rom. i. 18, 20. ii. 15, 26. i. 21. yea may, as St. Paul implieth, be able to know God, and induced to serve him; to thank him, and to glorify him in some measure; in a measure answer-

[k] Adhibita est semper universis hominibus quædam supernæ mensura doctrinæ, quæ etsi occultioris parciorisque gratiæ fuit, suffecit tamen quibusdam ad remedium, omnibus ad testimonium. ii. 15.

[l] Rom. ii 14, 15.

—Nulli nationi hominum bonitatis suæ dona subtraxit, ut propheticas voces et præcepta legalia convincerentur in elementorum obsequiis, et testimoniis accepisse. *De Voc. G.* i. 5. Rom. i. 19.

able to such light and strength; no more doth God require, for no more will he reckon with them. If their helps be deemed more low and scanty, their duty in proportion is less high, and their account will be more easy. Enough certainly they have to excuse God from misprision of not having provided competently for them, to render them, if they do not well use and improve it, inexcusable; and what they have is an effect of God's mercy procured and purchased by their Saviour. But of this point we may have occasion afterward to say more; I shall now only add, that this suggestion, well considered, may afford another argument to confirm our doctrine; which is this.

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Rom. i. 20.

10. If *our Lord* be the *Saviour* of all those to whom God's truth is declared, and his mercy offered; or, if he be the *Saviour* of all the members of the visible church; particularly if he be the *Saviour* of those, who among these, rejecting the overtures and means of grace, or by disobedience abusing them, shall in the event fail of being saved, then is he the *Saviour* of all men. But *our Lord* is the *Saviour* of those persons; and therefore he is *the Saviour of all men.* The *assumption* we assayed to shew in the last argument; and many express testimonies of scripture before mentioned establish it; the common style of scripture doth imply it, when in the apostolical writings to all the visibly faithful indifferently the relation to Christ as their Saviour is assigned, an interest in all his saving performances is supposed, the title of σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι (with others equivalent, of *justified, sanctified, regenerated, quickened,* &c.) are attributed. And in our text God is said to be *the Saviour* chiefly τῶν πιστῶν,

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of the faithful; which word in its common acception denotes all visible members of the Christian communion. And for its confirmation we adjoin; the apostles at first, and the church ever since after them (except some heterodox people of late) have professed readily to confer holy baptism, and therein to dispense remission of sins, together with other evangelical graces and privileges, to every man professing his faith in Christ, and resolution to observe Christ's law, upon this supposition, that Christ is the *Saviour* of all such persons, and by his salutary passion hath purchased that remission for them; although the dispensers of these graces could not discern what decrees God in his secret providence had passed upon them, or what the event should be as to their final state; yea although according to the judgment of prudence they could not but conceive, that all such should not be saved, but that many of them should be of those, who (as the apostle to the Heb. x. 39. Hebrews speaketh) would *draw back unto perdi-* 2 Pet. i. 9. *tion,* who (as St. Peter implies some might and would do) would forget the purgation which they had received of their sins. That in thus doing the church proceeds upon a persuasion that Christ is truly the Saviour of all its visible members, duly admitted and incorporated thereinto, the thing itself plainly signifies; the tenor of its practice makes palpable; the forms of speech used in its holy administrations (of prayers, of sacraments, of exhortations) do suppose or express. For how can each member singly be asserted in holy baptism to be washed from his sins, and sanctified to God, and made regenerate or adopted into the number of God's children, and made partaker of Christ's death? How can thanksgiving in

the common name, in most general terms, be offered up for Christ's saving performances? or the holy bread and cup be imparted to each communicant as symbols and pledges of Christ's charity and mercy toward him? How can every Christian be instigated to obedience in gratitude to Christ; and those who transgress Christ's laws, upbraided for their ingratitude toward him; their rejecting, or renouncing, despising, or abusing him and his salvation? How can such things be said and done with any truth or consistency; yea without forgery and mockery, if every baptized Christian hath not an interest in our Lord's performances; if Christ be the Saviour only of an uncertain and unknown part in the church? This consideration of the church's practice hath made even the most vehement assertors of St. Austin's doctrine, (strained to the highest pitch,) in the more ancient and modest times, fully to acknowledge this position; that Christ is the Redeemer of every member of the visible church, as appears by this remarkable decree of the council of Valentia in France, (consisting of the bishops of three provinces, favourers of Godscalcus's opinions.) [m] *We also do believe it most firmly to be held, that all the multitude of the faithful, being regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, and hereby truly incorporated into the church, and according to the apostolical doctrine baptized into the death of Christ, is by his blood washed from their sins.* Because there could be no true regeneration, unless there were made also a true redemption; since in the sacraments of the church there is nothing empty, (or vain,) nothing

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[m] Item firmissime tenendum credimus, &c. supra.

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ludificatory; but all thoroughly true, and supported by its own very truth and sincerity. Yet that out of the very company of believers and the redeemed, some are eternally saved, because by God's grace they faithfully abide in their redemption, bearing the Lord's speech in their hearts, *He that perseveres to the end shall be saved;* and that others, because they would not abide in the salvation of the faith which they at first received, and did rather choose to frustrate the grace of redemption by evil doctrine or life, than to keep it, do nowise arrive to the plenitude of salvation, and to the perception of eternal beatitude. It is then a catholic and true doctrine, that at least Christ is a Saviour of all appearing Christians; and supposing the truth thereof, I say that by consequence he is also the Saviour of all men. For it appeareth thence, that the design of our Saviour's performances did not flow from, or was not grounded upon any special love, or any absolute decree concerning those persons who in event shall be saved; since according to that supposition it extendeth to many others; wherefore it proceeded from God's natural goodness, and common kind affection toward mankind; from the compassion of a gracious Creator toward his miserable creature, whence all men are concerned and interested therein. Why God's merciful intentions were not explicitly declared and propounded to Socrates and Epictetus, as they were to Judas Iscariot and Simon Magus, is another question, which we may afterward in some manner assoil; at present, it suffices to say, that the overture of mercy made to such wretches doth argue God's kind disposition and good intention toward all men; so it did in St. Ambrose's

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opinion; who says, that our Lord ought not to pass by the man who should betray him, that all men might take notice, that in the choice even of his traitor he did hold forth a pledge or mark of all men's being to be saved [n].

But the truth of this doctrine will further appear by the declaration and surveyal of those respects according to which Christ is represented the Saviour of men, as also by considering how useful and conducible to piety this doctrine is, as ministering grounds and obligations, encouragements and motives, to the practice of most considerable duties required from all men. But these things must be reserved to another occasion.

[n] Et ideo nec prodituram debuit præterire, ut adverterent omnes, quod in electione etiam proditoris sui servandorum omnium insigne prætendit. *Ambr. de Parad.* 8.

SERMON LXXII.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

1 Tim. iv. 10.

——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

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THAT our Lord Jesus is the Saviour of all men, we have before from plain testimonies of holy scripture, and from some arguments grounded there, assayed to shew. The same will be made further apparent by considering the respects according to which he is such; and those we may first consider generally and in the gross, then survey them more particularly and distinctly.

In general we may say, that our Lord is *the Saviour of all men*, for that he hath rendered all men *salvabiles*, capable of salvation; and *salvandos*, designed to salvation. For that he hath removed all obstacles peremptorily debarring men from access to salvation, and hath procured competent furtherances to their attainment of it. For that he hath rescued mankind out of that dead and desperate condition, wherein it lay involved; being *the bread of God*, who *hath descended from heaven, that he might give life to the world*, as he saith of himself. For

John vi. 33.

that he hath performed whatever on his part is necessary or fit in order to salvation, antecedently to the acceptance and compliance with those reasonable conditions, which by God's wisdom are required toward the instating men into a full and immediate right to salvation, or to a complete and actual fruition thereof. He made the way to happiness plain and passable; levelling the insuperable cliffs, and filling up the chasms, and rectifying the obliquities, and smoothing the asperities thereof, as the prophet foretold; so that all men, who would, might conveniently walk therein. [a] He set the doors of paradise wide open, so that who pleased might enter in; all the bonds and restraints under which men lay, he so far loosed, that any man might be free, who would concur to his own liberty and enlargement. All the protection, aid, and encouragement which was needful toward obtaining salvation, he afforded and exhibited to every one that would embrace and make use of them. In respect to which performances he might be justly esteemed and truly called a *Saviour*, although all men do not in effect become saved. For the estimation and denomination of performances are to be grounded upon their own nature and design, not upon events depending upon the contingent and arbitrary behaviour of men. As he that freely offers a rich boon is no less to be accounted a benefactor and liberal, although his gift be refused, than if it were accepted; as he that opens the prison is to be styled a deliverer, although the captive will not go forth; as he that ministers an effectual remedy, although the patient will not use it, deserves the

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Luke iii. 5.

Luke iv. 18. Αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν.

[a] Ἡ γῆ ἀντὶ κατάρας εὐλόγηται, ὁ παράδεισος ἠνοίγη, &c. Athan.

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honour and thanks due to a physician; so is *our Lord* in regard to what he hath performed for men, and offered to them, (being sufficient to prevent their misery, and promote their happiness,) to be worthily deemed, and thankfully acknowledged, their *Saviour*, although not all men, yea although not one man should receive the designed benefit. Accordingly we may observe, that in the scripture-style, those persons are said to be saved, who are only in a way toward salvation, although they do not arrive thither; and the means conducing to salvation are said to save, although their effect may be defeated; σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι are terms applied to all Christians, and Christ is ὁ σώσας, *he that hath saved them*; and *faith* is said to have *saved them*, although some of them εἰκῆ ἐπίστευσαν, have *believed in vain*, or to no effect, forsaking and renouncing their faith; and *baptism* saves them who partake it, although being washed, they return to their wallowing in the mire. And as our Lord is so termed a *Saviour* in respect to them, who are, by faith and admission into the church, put into a more near capacity of salvation, as St. Paul speaketh: ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἡ σωτηρία ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν, (*Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed*;) so is he in respect of all those, who are in any capacity thereof, although a more remote one.

Acts xvi. 17. Καταγγέλλουσιν ὁδὸν σωτηρίας.— 1 Cor. i. 18. Acts ii. 47. Rev. xxi. 24. Eph. ii. 5. 2 Tim. i. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 2. Tit. iii. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 21. 2 Pet. ii. 22. Rom. xiii. 11.

But let us now view more nearly and distinctly the respects in which he is *a Saviour of all men*, or the particular benefits and advantages conducing to salvation, which by his performances accrue to mankind; for πάμπολυ τὴν σωτηρίαν ἁπάσῃ χαρίζεται τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι, *in very many ways he bestoweth salvation upon all mankind*, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks.

Clem. Alex. Pædag. 11.

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1. Our Lord is *the Saviour of all men*, as having effected that Almighty God (who upon great provocations was justly displeased and angry with man, who had averted his face, and withdrawn his favour from mankind, whom our apostasy and rebellion had rendered a stranger and an enemy to us) hath deposed his wrath toward mankind, hath conceived a kind affection to it, doth cast a favourable aspect upon it; being thoroughly reconciled and made a friend thereto by our Saviour's mediation. *This is my beloved Son, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, in whom I have been well pleased*, was the attestation given from God to our Lord; the meaning whereof in regard to men the holy choir of angels did interpret, when after the gladsome report of his birth, (that *great joy, which should be to all people*,) they sang, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good-will toward men*. Which St. Paul further declareth, when he saith, that by him εὐδόκησε, God pleased to reconcile unto himself all things, upon earth, and in heaven; and when he saith, *That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins*. And, *When we were enemies*, saith he again, *we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: When we were enemies*, that implies God antecedently to any man's conversion to have been appeased, and become favourably disposed toward all men, or toward those whom St. Paul speaketh unto, as men; so the reason of the case doth import, and so the analogy which St. Paul immediately after propounds between the results of Adam's transgression and our Saviour's obedience (as to provocation and reconciliation, to condemnation and absolution, to the intents of bringing death

Matt. iii. 17. xii. 18.

Luke ii. 10, 14.

Col. i. 20. Eph. i. 10.

2 Cor. v. 19.

Rom. v. 10.

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and life upon all men) doth enforce. Whence it is, that God declareth himself now to bear an universal good-will to mankind, that he doth earnestly desire the welfare of all men, and is displeased with the ruin of any man; that he *would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth*, because *there is one Mediator between God and man; that he would not have any perish, but that all should come to repentance;* this he affirms, yea (for the confirmation of our faith and our consolation therein) he in the evangelical prophet swears it, *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* So far toward our salvation is done, God meets us half way; he is reconciled unto us, it remains only that we be reconciled to him; that we hearken to the embassy from him: *Be reconciled to God.*

1 Tim. ii. 4.

2 Pet. iii. 9. Heb. vi. 16, 18.

Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

2 Cor. v. 20.

2. Jesus is *the Saviour of all men*, by satisfying the divine justice, and repairing God's honour in their behalf. The disloyal and ingrateful behaviour of man had so wronged, so endamaged, so dishonoured God, (had so abused the goodness, disparaged the wisdom, slighted the power, impeached and slurred the authority of his Creator, had so prejudiced all the rights and interests of God,) that by the divine wisdom it was thought fit, that he should not be restored into a capacity of mercy and favour, without a signal compensation made, and an exemplary punishment undergone, whereby the right of God should conspicuously be asserted, his love of goodness and dislike of wickedness should be remarkably demonstrated[b], and every creature in hea-

[b] Λοιπὸν δὲ οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὐκέτι κατὰ τὰ ἴδια πάθη μένουσιν, ἁμαρτωλοὶ

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ven and earth should be solemnly admonished of its duty; of the reverence and obedience it owes to the great Creator, of the heinous guilt and horrible mischief it incurs by offending him. Such a compensation man was nowise able to make, or fit to undergo such a punishment: our Saviour therefore, out of infinite pity and charity, did undertake both[c]; by a voluntary condescension putting himself into the low and weak state of man; subjecting himself unto that law which man was obliged unto, and suffering the pains which man had deserved. This he was pleased to do in man's behalf, and in our stead; and God was pleased to accept it as so done. [d]His incarnation (or exinanition of himself, as St. Paul calleth it) was an act of that high duty and goodness, that it in virtue surpassed all the obedience which all creatures were able to render; that it yielded God more satisfaction and more honour than the joint endeavours of all the world could confer. His with so intense charity and cheerfulness fulfilling all righteousness did far more please God than all our most exact obedience could have done; his enduring bitter pains and disgraces (considering the infinite dignity of his person, his near relation and dearness to God, his perfect innocence and rectitude, yea his immense charity, contentedness, and patience) more than countervailed the punishment due to the sins of all men. Such a payment was

Phil. ii. 7.

Vide Cyrill. in Eph. Conc. p. 133. Δικαιώσῃ τὴν ἀνθρώπου φύσιν, &c.

καὶ νεκροί. ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ λόγου δύναμιν ἀναστάντες ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἄφθαρτοι ἀεὶ διαμένουσιν. Athan. in Arian. Orat. iv. 485.

[c] Τότε γὰρ καὶ θάνατος, καὶ κατάρα ἐλύετο, καὶ δαίμονες κατῃσχύνοντο καὶ ἐδειγματίζοντο θριαμβευομένοι, καὶ τὸ χειρόγραφον τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τῷ σταυρῷ προσηλοῦτο, &c. Chrys. in Johan. i. 14.

[d] Ἡ ἔνσαρκος παρουσία τοῦ σωτῆρος θανάτου λύτρον καὶ κτίσεως πάσης σωτηρία γέγονεν. Athan. ad Adelph. Ep.

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more than served to discharge all our debts, (it served to purchase an *overplus* of graces and blessings;) so rich a price was more than sufficient to ransom all the world from captivity; so goodly, so pure, so sweet, so precious a sacrifice might worthily expiate and atone all the guilts of men.

Eph. v. 2. Heb. x. 10. ix. 12. 1 Pet. i. 19.

Now if we inquire what our Saviour did redeem, the consideration of what he paid may, as St. Austin tells[e], help to inform us; *Quæritis quid emerit? Videte quid dederit, et invenite quid emerit. Do ye seek*, saith he, *what he bought? See what he gave, and find what he bought.* However, that as the value and sufficiency of our Lord's performances, so the design and effect thereof did reach so far in regard to man; that his charity was no less extensive than his performance was complete, for our good, the holy scripture teaches us. For, *He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world*, saith the Baptist. And, *The bread*, saith he, *which I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* And, *He is a propitiation*, saith St. John, *for our sins; and not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.* And, *He is the Mediator of God and man, who gave himself* (ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων) *a ransom*, in the stead, and *for all men*, saith St. Paul. And, *He tasted death for every one*, saith the author to the Hebrews. And, He was *that one Man*, who, as it was *expedient*, did *die for the whole nation* of men. And, *God was in him, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their sins.* And, *He came into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might by*

Aug. in Ps. xcv. John i. 29. John vi. 51. 1 John ii. 2. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Heb. ii. 9. John xi. 50. xviii. 14. iii. 17. 2 Cor. v. 19. John iii. 17.

[e] Μὴ θαυμάζῃς εἰ κόσμος ὅλος ἐλυτρώθη· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἄνθρωπος ψιλὸς, ἀλλ' υἱὸς Θεοῦ μονογενὴς, ὁ ὑπεραποθνήσκων, &c. Cyrill. Cat. 13.

n be saved, (or freed from condemnation.) And, SERM. LXXII.
by the offence of one man judgment came upon
men to condemnation, so by the righteousness Rom. v. 18.
one, mercy came upon all to justification of life.
ie end we see of our Saviour's performances was,
it he might *wipe* off the guilt of sin from all man-
id[f], that he might reverse the condemnation
ssed thereupon, and that he might remove the
nishment due thereto; or that, absolving the first
n's sin, he might take it away from the whole
e, as St. Athanasius speaks.

All men have sinned, and come short (or are Rom. iii.
titute) *of the glory of God; being justified* 23, 24.
ely by his grace, by the redemption that is in
rist Jesus. Christ hath redeemed us from the Gal. iii. 13.
se of the law, being made a curse for us. He iv. 5.
born under the law, that he might redeem
e which were under the law. He that knew 2 Cor. v.
in was made sin, (was punished and dealt with 21.
sinner,) *that we might be made the righteous-*
of God in him, (that we might be capable of
esteemed and dealt with as righteous by God
his account.) So that the result is, divine
being fully satisfied, and the honour of God
epaired, (in regard to all sins past and future,)
outh of vengeance being stopped, the claims
h and hell being evacuated, that general sen-
f condemnation (passed upon all the sons of
is suspended, death ceases to reign by any
er, or inevitable necessity; (it is, as St. Paul 2 Tim. i.
olished or abrogated as to any lawful right, 10. Gal. iii. 10,
ary force it hath;) the rigour and severity 12. Rom. x. 5.

ίνου λύων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ἀπὸ παντὸς αὐτὴν ἄρῃ τοῦ γένους.
ıss.

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of that law, which upon pain of death exacteth most punctual obedience, (and which consequently doth expose all men to unavoidable condemnation,) is tempered and abated, a foundation is laid for the shewing mercy, and granting pardon. In respect whereto,

3. Our Lord is *the Saviour of all men*, as having in the behalf of mankind transacted and ratified a new covenant, very necessary for, and very conducible to, the salvation of mankind; whereby salvation is made attainable, and is really tendered unto all, upon feasible and equal conditions. According to the purport whereof upon any man (however stained or loaded with the guilt of most heinous transgressions) his embracing the overtures thereof, consenting to, and complying with the terms propounded therein, that is, sincerely believing, and seriously repenting; returning to God with hearty desires and earnest resolutions to serve him; God is ready to dispense mercy and pardon, and immediately receiveth the person into grace and favour with him; yea, the man continuing to perform a faithful, though imperfect obedience, an obedience suitable to man's natural infirmity and frailty, and proportionable to the assistances afforded him; God further promiseth to bestow inestimable blessings and rewards of joy and happiness. That covenant which the prophets implied of old, when (beside and beyond what the Jewish law did import) they preached thus: *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil—though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool.* And, *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the un-*

Isa. i. 16.

Isa. i. 18.

Isa. lv. 7.

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righteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Ezek. xviii. 21. And, *If the wicked man will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die,* (so God in Isaiah and Ezekiel declareth his intention to proceed with men, avowing that way of his to be most equal and fair.) This is that covenant which our Lord commanded his apostles to declare and propound to all mankind; *Go ye,* said he to them, *into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature;* that gospel according to which, as it is expressed in St. Luke, *repentance and remission of sins ought to be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;* in respect to which, St. Peter says, that *God hath exalted* our Lord *to be a Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance to Israel, and remission of sins;* (*to grant repentance,* that is, as the apostle to the Hebrews and Clemens Romanus speak, *μετανοίας τόπον,* room for repentance, or capacity to receive pardon upon repentance; concerning which covenant that Clemens, (the fellow-labourer of St. Paul, and whom Clemens Alexandrinus calleth an apostle,) in that excellent, admirable, and almost canonical Epistle to the Corinthians, which, as Eusebius and Jerome tell us, was anciently publicly read in most churches, hath these remarkably full and clear expressions; [g] *Let us,* saith he, *look steadfastly*

Mark xvi. 15. Luke xxiv. 47. Acts v. 31. Phil. iv. 3. Θαυμασία. Euseb. Ἐν πλείσταις ἐκκλησίαις. Euseb.

g Ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἴδωμεν ὡς ἐστι τίμιον τῷ Θεῷ αἷμα αὐτοῦ, ὅτι διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν ἐκχυθὲν, παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ὑπήνεγκεν. Ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς γενεὰς πάσας καὶ καταμάθωμεν ὅτι ἐν γενεᾷ καὶ γενεᾷ μετανοίας τόπον ἔδωκεν ὁ δεσπότης τοῖς βουλομένοις ἐπιστραφῆναι ἐπ' αὐτόν. Clem. ad Corinth.

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upon the blood of Christ, and let us see how precious to God his blood is, which being shed for our salvation, did bring the grace of repentance to the whole world. Let us attentively regard all ages, and observe that in every generation the Lord granted place of repentance to them who would turn unto him. This is that *new* and *better covenant, established upon better promises,* (cancelling all former, exceptionable, imperfect, and ineffectual compacts, referring to man's interest and duty,) about which the apostle to the Hebrews discourseth, and whereof he calleth *our Lord* the *Mediator* and *Sponsor;* in regard to which St. Paul calleth him *the Mediator between God and man;* plainly declaring all men to have a concernment and interest therein; for this supposition he useth as an argument proving God's universal desire of man's conversion and salvation: *Who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*[h]. By virtue of which covenant it is, that any such degrees of love or fear toward God, such as men are capable of, are available, any righteous performances, such as our weakness can produce, are acceptable, any honest endeavours do receive countenance and encouragement; and that, as St. Peter observed, *in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him;* although his fear of God be not so intense or pure; his righteousness not so exact and unblameable, as, according to extremity of law and

Heb. viii. 6. ix. 15. xii. 24. vii. 22. 2Cor. iii. 6.

1 Tim. ii. 4, 5.

Acts x. 35.

[h] Quo dicto ostenditur nullum hominem secundum naturam esse pollutum, sed æqualiter omnes ad Christi Evangelium provocari. *Hier. ad Aug. Epist.* 11.

and duty, they should be. From which covenant so far is any man, according to God's intention and desire, from being excluded, that all men are seriously invited, vehemently exhorted, earnestly entreated to enter into it, and to partake the benefits exhibited thereby. Every man who feeleth himself to want those benefits, and is desirous of mercy and ease from the guilt and burden of his sins, may come and welcome. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;* so the evangelical prophet proclaims; and, *If any man thirsteth, let him come to me and drink,* crieth our Lord; and, *Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* (Δεῦτε πάντες, *Come all to me:* all men therefore, saith Origen, who from the nature of sin do labour and are burdened, are called to that rest; which is with the Word of God[1].) And, *In Christ's name,* saith St. Paul, *we are ambassadors, as though God by us entreateth: we pray you for Christ's sake, be ye reconciled to God;* the purport of which embassy, together with its extent, he otherwhere thus expresseth, τανῦν παραγγέλλει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πᾶσι πανταχοῦ μετανοεῖν, *He now proclaimeth to all men every where that they should repent;* he consequently holds forth to all the benefits annexed to repentance. But of this we spake formerly.

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Isa. lv. 1. John vii. 37. Matt. xi. 28. 2 Cor. v. 20. Acts xvii. 30.

4. Our Lord Jesus is *the Saviour of all men,* as having purchased and procured for them competent aids, whereby they are enabled to perform the conditions required of them in order to their salvation; to acquire a sufficient knowledge of their duty, to

[1] Πάντες οὖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι διὰ τὴν τῆς ἁμαρτίας φύσιν κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι καλοῦνται ἐπὶ τὴν παρὰ τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀνάπαυσιν. Orig. in Cels. 3.

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subdue their bad inclinations and lusts, to withstand temptations; or briefly, whereby they are enabled sincerely to repent of their sins, and acceptably to perform their due obedience. The truth of this point, taking in the consideration of man's natural state, may by good consequence be inferred from the truth of the points foregoing. If men are naturally so dead in trespasses and sins, so enslaved and sold under sin; so very prone to evil, and averse to good; so dark and blind, that they cannot well discern what they should do; so corrupt and weak, that they cannot perform what they know and confess to be good, (as St. Paul affirmeth men to be,) and consequently are of themselves indisposed to perform the duties acceptable to God[k], and requisite by his appointment toward their salvation, then either our Lord hath provided for them a communication of grace sufficient to countervail or surmount that natural impotency, or all his designs for their good are imperfect or inconsistent, (aiming at an end, without providing requisite means, or removing necessary obstructions,) and his performances, whereby the forementioned benefits were procured, do prove ineffectual and fruitless. For God being appeased, and become well-affected to man's salvation, divine justice being satisfied, the rigour of law being mitigated, repentance being made available, and an obedience, agreeable to man's frailty, becoming acceptable, with all other the immediate results of our Saviour's transactions for man, would signify nothing in regard to

Eph. ii. 1. Col. ii. 13. Rom. vii. 14, 15. Eph. v. 8. 2 Cor. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 19, &c.

Ὁ ἐπὶ τὰ αἰσχρὰ ὁλισθὼν αὐτεφυοῦς ἀσθενείας ἔργον. Max. Tyr. Diss. 22.

[k] Si Deus non operatur in nobis, nullius possumus esse participes virtutis; sine hoc quippe bono nihil est bonum, sine hac luce nihil est lucidum, sine hac sapientia nihil sanum, sine hac justitia nihil rectum. *De Voc. Gent.* i. 8.

him who still lieth under a necessity of sinning, or an inability of performing that which is indispensably exacted from him toward a complete enjoyment of those benefits and favours. In vain is the debt paid, and the bond cancelled, and the prison set open, and liberty proclaimed, and the prisoner called forth, if he be not himself able to knock off the fetters which detain him, and there is no help afforded, by which he may do it. But our Lord hath surely laid his designs more advisedly, and hath prosecuted his work more perfectly. Wherefore we may suppose that a competency of grace and spiritual assistance is by virtue of our Saviour's performances really imparted to every man, qualifying him to do what God requires, and is ready to accept from him in order to his welfare; that our Saviour hath sent abroad his holy Spirit, (that fountain of all true goodness, of all spiritual light, strength, and comfort,) like the sun, to shine, to warm, to dispense benign influences over the world; although it shineth not so brightly and vigorously, and its presence is not so visible and sensible in one place as another; which Holy Spirit, as it is in its essence omnipresent, so it is likewise in its energy incessantly working (in reasonable measure, right manner, and fit season, as wisdom ordereth) upon the minds and affections of men, infusing good thoughts and motions, impressing arguments and motives to good practice, cherishing and promoting good purposes, checking bad designs, restraining and reclaiming from bad courses. Our reason, however aided by exterior instruction and excitement, being unable to deal with those mighty temptations, oppositions, and discouragements we are to encounter with, he hath given us a wise and

Τοῖς εὖ βιοῦν ἱκανημένοις ἰσχὺν πρὸς τὴν λοιπὴν σωτηρίαν ἐμποιεῖ. Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. p. 523.

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powerful Spirit, to guide and advise us, to excite and encourage us, to relieve and succour us in all our religious practice and spiritual warfare. So that all deliverance from the prevalency of temptation and sin we owe to his grace and assistance. That to these purposes the Holy Spirit is plentifully conferred upon all the visible members of the Christian church, we have plainly declared in scripture; it was a promise concerning the evangelical times, that God would pour forth his Spirit upon all flesh; the collation thereof is a main part of the evangelical covenant, (into a participation of which every Christian is admitted,) it being the finger of God, whereby God's law is impressed upon their inward parts, and engraven in their hearts, (as the prophets describe the effects of this covenant.) And the end of our Saviour's passion is by St. Paul declared to be, *that the blessing of Abraham might come unto the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith*; that is, that becoming Christians we might partake thereof. And the apostolical ministry (that is, preaching the gospel, and dispensing the privileges thereof) is therefore styled, διακονία πνεύματος, *the ministry of the Spirit.* And the *tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking the Holy Ghost*, is, according to the apostle to the Hebrews, part of the character of a visible Christian, (such a Christian, who might παραπεσεῖν, *fall away*, as he supposeth, and *recrucify the Lord, and expose him to shame:*) and St. Peter makes reception of the Holy Ghost to be a concomitant or consequent of baptism; *Repent*, saith he, *and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the*

Joel ii. 28. Acts ii. 17.
Jer. xxxi. 33. Ezek. xi. 19. Heb. viii. 11. 2 Cor. iii. 3.
Gal. iii. 14.
2 Cor. iii. 8.
Heb. vi. 4, 5.
2 Thess. ii. 3.
Acts ii. 38, 39.

Holy Ghost; for the promise (or that promise of the Spirit, which is called *the Spirit of promise* peculiar to the gospel) *is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call:* (that is, the Holy Spirit is promised to all, how far distant soever in time or place, who shall be invited unto, and shall embrace Christianity;) and accordingly, St. Paul saith of Christians, that *God according to his mercy hath saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* And, *Know ye not,* saith he to the Corinthians, *that ye are the temple of God; and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* (that is, Do ye not understand this to be a common property and privilege of Christians, such as ye profess yourselves to be?) And the union of all Christians into *one body* doth, according to St. Paul, result from this *one Spirit,* as a common soul imparted to them all, inanimating and actuating the whole body, and every member thereof. For *by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free, and have been all made to drink of one Spirit.* And it hath been the doctrine constantly with general consent delivered in and by the catholic church, that to all persons, by the holy mystery of baptism duly initiated into Christianity, and admitted into the communion of Christ's body, the grace of the Holy Spirit is communicated, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue which they undertake; and continually watching over them for accomplishment of those purposes; which Spirit they are admonished not to resist, to abuse, to grieve, to quench; but to use it well, and improve its grace to

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Eph. i. 13.

Tit. iii. 5.

1 Cor. iii. 16.

1 Cor. xii. 13.

Eph. iv. 30. 1 Cor. xii. 7. Phil. ii. 13.

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the working out their salvation. Thus much concerning the result of our Saviour's performances, in this kind, in respect to the community of Christians, we learn from the holy scripture and ecclesiastical tradition interpreting it; whence we may discern, that the communications of grace do not always flow from any special love or absolute decree concerning men, but do commonly proceed from the general kindness and mercy of God, by our Lord procured for mankind; and consequently we may thence collect, that somewhat of this nature is to the same purpose, from the same source, and upon the same account, also granted and dispensed to others. Unto Christians indeed this great benefit (for the reward, the encouragement, the support of their faith; and for promoting their obedience, who are in a nearer capacity and more immediate tendency to salvation) is in a more plentiful measure, and a more conspicuous manner dispensed; but that, besides that dispensation, there have been other (not so plainly signified, or expressly promised, yet really imparted) communications of grace, in virtue of our Saviour's merits, there are (beside the main reason alleged, inferring it from our Lord's being the Saviour of all men) divers good inducements to believe. For even those Christians, to whom upon their faith the Holy Spirit is promised and bestowed, are by previous operations of God's grace (opening their minds, inclining their heart, and tempering their affections) induced to embrace Christianity, faith itself being a gift of God, and a fruit of the Holy Spirit. And before our Saviour's coming all good men have thereby been instructed and enabled to do well. [1]And before

Eph. ii. 8. Gal. v. 22. Luke xxiv. 45. Matt. xvi. 17. John xvi. 12. 1 Cor. xii. 3.

[1] Ex quo perspicuum fit natura omnibus inesse Dei notitiam,

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any special revelation made, or any particular covenant enacted, (before the enclosure of a particular people or church, the confinement of God's extraordinary presence and providence to one place,) divine grace appears diffused over several nations, being watchful in guiding and moving men to good, and withdrawing them from evil; neither is there reason why such an appropriation of special graces and blessings (upon special reasons) unto some should be conceived to limit or contract God's general favour, or to withdraw his ordinary graces from others. God surely (*who is* πλούσιος ἐν ἐλέει, *rich in mercy*; yea, Eph. ii. 4, hath ὑπερβάλλοντα πλοῦτον χάριτος, *excessive riches of grace*) is not so poor or parsimonious, that being liberal to some should render him sparing toward others[m]; his grace is not like the sea, which if it overflow upon one shore, must therefore retire from another; if it grow deep in one place, must become shallower in another. *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened?* it is a question in Micah; and, *Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?* is another question in Isaiah: *No; The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear;* at any time, in any place; he is no less able, no less ready than he ever was, to afford help to his poor creatures wherever

Mic. ii. 7.

Isa. l. 2. lix. 1.

nec quemquam sine Christo nasci, et non habere semina in se sapientiæ, justitiæ, reliquarumque virtutum. Unde multi absque fide, et evangelio Christi vel sapienter faciunt aliqua vel sancte, &c. *Hier. in Galat.* i.

[m] Secundum scripturam credimus et piissime confitemur, quod nunquam universitati hominum divinæ providentiæ cura defuerit. Quem licet exceptum sibi populum specialibus ad pietatem direxerit institutis, nulli tamen nationi hominum bonitatis suæ dona subtraxit, &c. *De Vocat. Gent.* i. 5.

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it is needful or opportune. As there was of old an Abimelech among the Philistines, whom God by special warning deterred from commission of sin; a divine Melchisedeck among the Canaanites; a discreet and honest Jethro in Midian; a very religious and virtuous Job in Arabia; who by complying with God's grace, did evidence the communication thereof in several nations; so it is not unreasonable to suppose the like cause now, although we cannot by like attestation certify concerning the particular effects thereof. We may at least discern and shew very conspicuous footsteps of divine grace, working in part, and producing no despicable fruits of moral virtue, (of justice and honesty, temperance and sobriety, benignity and bounty, courage and constancy in worthy enterprises, meekness, patience, modesty, prudence, and discretion, yea, of piety and devotion in some manner,) even among pagans, which if we do not allow to have been in all respects so complete, as to instate the persons endued with them, or practisers of them, in God's favour, or to bring them to salvation[n]; yet those qualities and actions (in degree, or in matter at least, so good and so conformable to God's law) we can hardly deny to have been the gifts of God, and the effects of divine grace; they at least themselves acknowledged so much; for, *Nulla sine Deo mens bona est, No mind is good without God,* said Seneca[o]; and, Θείᾳ μοίρᾳ φαίνεται παραγι-

Gen. xx. 3. xxvi. 8.

Exod. xviii.

Καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἰδικαίου τινὸς καὶ ἡ φιλοσοφία τοὺς Ἕλληνας. Clem. Alex.

[n] Mortalem vitam honestare possunt, æternam conferre non possunt. *Prosper in Collat.* cap. 26.

(Prodesse ad salutem. *Aug. Prosper, Fulgent. &c.*)

Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit. *Cic. de Nat. Deorum* ii. *sub fin.*

[o] Sen. Ep. 73.

—Quæ secundum justitiæ regulam non solum vituperare non

γιγνέτη ἡ ἀρετὴ, οἷς παραγίνεται, *Virtue appears to proceed from a divine dispensation to them who partake of it,* said Socrates [p]: and, Αἱ ἄριστα φύσεις, ἀμφισβητήσιμοι ἐν μετρίῳ τῆς ἄκρας ἀρετῆς πρὸς τὴν ἐσχάτην μοχθηρίαν καθωρμισμέναι, δέονται ξυναγωνίστου Θεοῦ καὶ ξυλλήπτορος τῆς ἐπὶ τὰ θάτερα τὰ κρείττω ῥοπῆς καὶ χειραγωγίας. *The best natured souls being constituted in the middle, between the highest virtue and extreme wickedness, do need God to be their succourer and assistant in the inclining and leading them to the better side;* saith Max. Tyr. xxii. St. Austin himself, who seems the least favourable in his judgment concerning their actions and state, who calls their virtues but images and shadows of virtue, (*non veras, sed verisimiles,*) splendid sins; acknowledges those virtuous dispositions and deeds to be the gifts of God, to be laudable, to procure some reward, to avail so far, that they, because of them, shall receive a more tolerable and mild treatment from divine justice; which things considered, such persons do at least, by virtue of grace imparted to them [q], obtain some part of salvation, or an imperfect kind of salvation, which they owe to our Lord, and in regard whereto he may be called in a sort their Saviour. SERM. LXXII. —Dei dona. Epist. 130. Aug.

But although the torrent of natural pravity hath prevailed so far, as that we cannot assign or nominate any (among those who have lived out of the pale) who certainly or probably have obtained salvation,

possumus, sed etiam merito recteque laudamus. *Aug. de Spir. et Lit.* cap. 27.

[p] Plat. Menon. ad finem.

[q] Tolerabilius puniuntur. Minus Fabricius quam Catilina punietur, &c.—non veras virtutes habendo, sed a veris virtutibus non plurimum deviando. *Aug.*

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yet doth it not follow thence, that a sufficient grace was wanting to them. The most universal practice contrary to the intents of grace doth not evince a defect of grace. For we see that the same cause hath in a manner universally overborne and defeated other means and methods designed and dispensed by God for the instruction and emendation of mankind.

Gen. vi. 3. 1 Pet. iii. 20. God's Spirit did long strive with the inhabitants of the *old world:* yet no more than one family was bettered or saved thereby. God by his good Spirit instructed the Israelites in the wilderness, as Nehemiah saith; yet no more than two persons did get into Canaan: that people afterward had afforded to them great advantages of knowledge and excitements to piety, (so that God intimates, that he could not have done more for them, in that regard, than he had done.) Yet, *There is none that understandeth, or seeketh after God,* was a complaint in the best times. The pagans had the means of knowing God, as St. Paul affirmeth, yet generally they grew vain in their imaginations, and *their foolish heart was darkened;* from which like cases and examples we may infer, that divine grace might be really imparted, although no effect correspondent to its main design were produced. Neither, because we cannot allege any evident instances of persons converted or saved by virtue of this grace, (this *parcior occultiorque gratia, more sparing and secret grace,* as the good writer *de Vocatione Gentium* calls it,) are we forced to grant there were none such; but as in Israel when Elias said, the children of Israel have *forsaken God's covenant, thrown down his altars, and slain his prophets with the sword; and I, I*

Neh. ix. 20.

Isa. v. 4. Psal. xiv.

Rom. i. 21.

1 Kings xix. 14, 18.

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only am left; there were yet *in Israel,* living closely, *seven thousand knees, who had not bowed to Baal:* so among the generations of men, commonly overgrown with ignorance and impiety, there might, for all that we can know, be divers persons indiscernible to common view, who, by complying with the influences of God's grace, have obtained competently to know God, and to reverence him; sincerely to love goodness, and hate wickedness; with an honest heart, to observe the laws of reason and righteousness, in such a manner and degree which God might accept; so that the grace afforded might not only *sufficere omnibus in testimonium,* (*suffice to convince all men,*) but *quibusdam in remedium,* (*to correct and cure some,*) as that writer *de Voc. Gent.* speaks. The consideration of God's nature and providence doth serve further to persuade the truth of this assertion. If God be *rich in mercy* and bounty toward all his creatures, as such, (and such he frequently asserts himself to be,) if he be all-present and all-provident, as he certainly is, how can we conceive him to stand as an unconcerned spectator of what men do, in affairs of this consequence? That he should be present beholding men to run precipitantly into desperate mischiefs and miscarriages, without offering to stay or obstruct them; struggling with their vices and follies, without affording them any relief or furtherance; assaulted by strong temptations, without yielding any support or succour; panting after rest and ease, without vouchsafing some guidance and assistance toward the obtaining them? How can he see men invincibly erring and inevitably sinning, without making good what the Psalmist says of him: *Good and upright* Psal. cxlv. 9. Psal. xxv. 8.

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is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way; to withhold his grace in such cases seemeth inconsistent with the kind and compassionate nature of God, especially such as now it stands, being reconciled to mankind by the *Mediator of God and men, Christ Jesus.* He also, that is so bountiful and indulgent toward all men in regard to their bodies and temporal state; *who preserveth their life from destruction,* who protecteth them continually from danger and mischief; *who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desires of every living thing; who satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness;* who, as St. Paul speaketh, *filleth men's hearts with food and gladness;* is it likely that he should altogether neglect their spiritual welfare, and leave their souls utterly destitute of all sustenance or comfort; that he should suffer them to lie fatally exposed to eternal death and ruin, without offering any means of redress or recovery? To conceive so of God seemed very unreasonable even to a pagan philosopher: *Do you think,* saith Max. Tyrius, *that divination, poetry, and such like things, are by divine inspiration insinuated into men's souls, and that virtue* (so much better, and so much rarer a thing) *is the work of moral art?* [r] *You have forsooth a worthy conceit of God, who take him to be liberal in bestowing mean things, and sparing of better things. He that,* as St. Paul saith, *giveth to all men life, breath, and all things,* will he withhold from any that best of gifts, and most worthy of him to give, that grace whereby he may be able to serve him, to praise him, to glorify him, yea, to please and gratify him;

Psal. ciii. 4.

cxlv. 16.

cvii, 9.

Acts xiv. 17.

Max. Tyr. Diss. 22.

Acts xvii. 25.

[r] Ἢ πολλοῦ ἄξιον νομίζεις τὸ θεῖον πρὸς μὲν τὰ φαῦλα καλῶς καὶ ἀφθόνως παρεσκευασμένον, πρὸς δὲ τὰ κρείττω ἄπορον.

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to save a creature and subject of his; the thing wherein he so much delighteth? From hence also, that God hath vouchsafed general testimonies of his goodness, inducements to seek him, footsteps whereby he may be discovered and known, a light of reason and law of nature written upon men's hearts; attended with satisfactions, and checks of conscience; so many dispositions to knowledge and obedience, as St. Paul teacheth us; we may collect that he is not deficient in communicating interior assistances, promoting the good use and improvement of those talents; for that otherwise the bestowing them is frustraneous and useless; being able to produce no good effect; yea, it rather is an argument of unkindness, being apt only to produce an ill effect in those upon whom it is conferred; an aggravation of sin, an accumulation of guilt and wrath upon them.

Acts xiv. 17. xvii. 27. Rom. i. 19. ii. 15.

If it be said, that having such grace is inconsistent with the want of an explicit knowledge of Christ, and of faith in him; why may not we say, that as probably (so St. Chrysostom, *vid. Mont. App.* I.) most good people before our Lord's coming received grace without any such knowledge or faith; that as to idiots and infants, our Saviour's meritorious performances are applied (in a manner unknowable by us) without so much as a capacity to know or believe any thing; that so we (to whom God's judgments are inscrutable, and his ways uninvestigable) know not how grace may be communicated unto, and Christ's merits may avail for other ignorant persons? in respect to whom we may apply that of St. John; *The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.* However, that such persons may have a grace capacifying them to arrive to

Rom. xi. 33.

John i. 5.

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that knowledge and faith, to which fuller communications of grace are promised; so that in reasonable esteem (as we shall presently shew) the revelation of evangelical truth, and the gift of faith, may be supposed to be conferred upon all men—so that we may apply to them that in the Revelation; *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him, and he with me;* (that is, Behold, I allure every man to the knowledge and embracing of Christianity; if any man will open his mind and heart, so as to comply with my solicitations, I am ready to bestow upon him the participation of evangelical mercies and blessings:) and to such persons those promises and rules in the gospel may appertain; *He that asketh receiveth; he that seeketh findeth; to him that knocketh it shall be opened: The heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. He that is* ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς (*faithful in the use of the least grace*) shall be rewarded. And, *To him that hath* (or that diligently keepeth and husbandeth what he hath) *shall more be given.*

Rev. iii. 20. Εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε, οὐκ ἂν εἴχετε ἁμαρτίαν.

John ix. 41. 15. xv. 22.

Luke xi. 10, 13.

Luke xix. 17.

Luke xix. 26.

And how God sometimes dealeth with such persons the eminent instances of St. Paul and Cornelius do shew. But concerning this point I spake somewhat before, and have perhaps been too large now; I shall only add that saying of the wise writer *de Voc. Gent. A pious mind,* saith he, *should not, I think, be troubled at that question, which is made concerning the conversion of all, or not all men; if we will not obscure those things which are clear, by those things which are secret; and while we wantonly insist upon things shut up, we be not ex-*

cluded from those which are open and plain[s]. Which in effect is the same with this; that since we are plainly taught, that our Lord is the Saviour of all men; and it is consequent thence, that he hath procured grace sufficiently capacifying all men to obtain salvation; we need not perplex the business or obscure so apparent a truth, by debating how that grace is imparted; or by labouring overmuch in reconciling the dispensation thereof with other dispensations of Providence. SERM. LXXII.

[s] Puto quod pius sensus non debeat in ea quæstione turbari, quæ de omnium et non omnium hominum conversione generatur; si ea quæ clara sunt non de his quæ occulta sunt obscuremus, et dum procaciter insistimus clausis excludamur ab apertis, &c. *Lib.* i. *cap.* 8.

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THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

1 Tim. iv. 10.

——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

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5. JESUS is *the Saviour of all men*, as the conductor of all men into and through the way of salvation. It is a very proper title, and most due to those brave captains, who by their wisdom and valour have freed their country from straits and oppressions. So were those judges and princes who anciently delivered Neh. ix. 27. Israel from their enemies commonly styled: *In the time of their trouble*, say the Levites in Nehemiah, *when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and, according to thy manifold mercies,* Judg. iii. 9, 15. *thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of* Acts vii. 35. *the hand of the enemy;* so are Othniel and Ehud particularly called; and Moses signally: *The same*, saith St. Stephen of him, *did God send to be* ἄρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτὴν, *a Commander and a Saviour* (or Redeemer) *to the children of Israel;* for that he by a worthy and happy conduct did free them from the Egyptian slavery. And thus was Demetrius by the Athenians (for his delivering them from the Macedonian subjection, and restoring their liberty to them) entitled, εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτὴρ, *a benefactor and*

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saviour. Thus with greatest reason is Jesus so called, as being ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας, *the Captain of salvation*, (so he is called by the apostle to the Hebrews,) ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς, (*the Captain of life*, as St. Peter names him, the chief Leader unto eternal life,) ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως, (*the Captain of our faith*; he that hath revealed that saving doctrine, which is the power of God to salvation:) and these titles we have conjoined by St. Peter in the Acts; *Him hath God exalted*, ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα, *as a Captain and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins*. This he is to us several ways, by direction both instructive and exemplary; by his protection and governance; by his mating and quelling the enemies of man's salvation; which things more specially and completely he hath performed in respect to faithful Christians, yet in a manner also he hath truly done them for and toward all men; as we shall distinctly consider.

Heb. ii. 10. Acts iii. 15. Heb. xii. 2. Rom. i. 16. Acts v. 31.

6. Jesus is *the Saviour of all men*, we say, as having perfectly discovered and demonstrated the way and means of salvation; the gracious purposes of God concerning it; the duties required by God in order to it; the great helps and encouragements to seek it; the mighty determents from neglecting it; the whole will of God, and concernment of man in relation thereto; briefly, all saving truths he hath revealed unto all men: *mysteries* of truth, which *were hidden from ages and generations*, which no fancy of man could invent, no understanding could reach, no reason could by discussion clear, (concerning the nature, providence, will, and purpose of God; the nature, original, and state of man; concerning the laws and rules of practice, the helps thereto,

Col. i. 26. Rom. xvi. 25.

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the rewards thereof, whatever is important for us to know in order to happiness,) he did plainly discover, and bring to light; he did with valid sorts of demonstration assert and confirm. The doing which, (as having so much efficacy toward salvation, and being ordinarily so necessary thereto,) is often called *saving;* as particularly by St. James; when he saith, *He that turns a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death.* And by St. Paul; *Take heed to thy word and doctrine; for so doing thou shalt save thyself and thy hearers.* That our Lord hath thus (according to his design, and according to reasonable esteem) *saved all men,* we are authorized by the holy scripture to say; for he is there represented to be *the light of the world; the true light that enlightneth every man coming into the world: the day-spring from on high, which hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace.* By him *the saving grace of God hath appeared unto all men.* By him (as Isaiah prophesied, and St. John the Baptist applied it) *all flesh did see the salvation of God.* Of him it was also foretold, as St. Paul teacheth us, *I have set thee for the light of the nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. Coming he preached peace* τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἐγγὺς (*longe lateque*) *to them that were far, and them that were near,* that is, *to all men every where. While I am in the world,* said he, *I am the light of the world;* shining, like the sun, indifferently unto all; and when he withdrew his corporal presence, he further virtually diffused his light, for he sent his messengers with a general commission and

Jam. v. 20.
1 Tim. iv. 16.
1 Cor. ix. 22.
Rom. xi. 14.
2 Tim. iii. 15.
σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν.
John viii. 12. i. 9.
Luke i. 79.
Tit. ii. 11. iii. 4.
2 Tim. i. 10.
Luke iii. 6.
Acts xiii. 47.
Eph. ii. 17.
John ix. 5.

command to teach all men concerning the benefits procured for them, and the duties required from them; *Going into the world, make all nations disciples, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. Going into the world, preach the gospel unto every creature,* (or, *to the whole creation:* so it ought to be.) *That in his name should be preached repentance and remission of sins unto all nations.* And such was the tenor of the apostolical commission; *Thou shalt be witness for him toward all men,* said Ananias to St. Paul. Accordingly, in compliance with those orders, did the apostles, in God's name, instruct and admonish all men, plainly teaching, seriously inviting to, strongly persuading, and earnestly entreating all men to embrace the truth, and enjoy the benefits of the gospel, and consequently to be saved: *The times of ignorance,* saith St. Paul, *God having winked at, doth now invite all men every where to repent:* and, *We are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God—We pray you,* you as members of that world which God was in Christ reconciling to himself; and, *We preach Christ——warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus,* (or, *render every man a good Christian.*) Thus was the gospel, according to our Saviour's intent and order, preached, as St. Paul saith of it, ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν, *in the whole creation under heaven;* thus did God shew that he would *have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth;* whence our Lord (in regard to the nature and design of his performance in

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Mat. xxviii. 19, 20.
Mark xvi. 15.
Luke xxiv. 47.
Acts xxii. 15. xxvi. 17.
Acts xvii. 30.
2 Cor. v. 20.
Col. i. 28.
Acts ii. 40.
Col. i. 23.
1 Tim. ii. 4.

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this kind) is the common Saviour, as the common master of truth, and enlightener of the world, and proclaimer of God's will to mankind.

John i. 18.

If now it be inquired or objected; why then is not the gospel revealed unto all men? How comes it to pass that no sound of this saving word, no glimpse of this heavenly light, doth arrive to many nations? How can so general and large intention consist with so particular and sparing execution? What benefit can we imagine them capable to receive from this performance of our Saviour, who still do sit in total ignorance of the gospel, *in darkness, and the shadow of death? How can they call upon him in whom they believe not? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard?*

Luke i. 74. Matt. iv. 16. Rom. x. 14.

To this suggestion I answer,

1. That God's intentions are not to be interpreted, nor his performances estimated by events, depending on the contingency of human actions, but by his own declarations and precepts, together with the ordinary provision of competent means, in their own nature sufficient to produce those effects which he declares himself to intend or to perform. What he reveals himself to design, he doth really design it; what he says, that he performeth; he (according to moral esteem, that is, so far as to ground duties of gratitude and honour, proceedings of justice and reward) doth perform, although the thing upon other accounts be not effected.

Thus, for instance, God would have all men to live together here in peace, in order, in health, conveniently, comfortably, cheerfully; according to reason, with virtue and justice; and in the best state toward happiness: for these purposes he hath

endued them with reasonable faculties, he hath engraven on their minds a natural law, he hath furnished them with all sorts of instruments and helps conducible to those ends; he promoteth them by dispensations of providence, and, probably, by internal influences of grace: yet often all those means, by the perverseness and stupidity of men, do prove ineffectual, so that wars, disorders, diseases, vices, iniquities and oppressions, troubles and miseries, do commonly abound in the world. Likewise God desires, that in his church, knowledge and piety, peace and charity, and good order should grow and flourish; to which purposes he hath appointed teachers to instruct, and governors to watch over his people: he hath obliged each man to advise and admonish his brother; he hath declared holy precepts and rules of practice; he hath propounded vast encouragements and rewards, and threatened dreadful punishments; he hath promised and doth afford requisite assistances; being himself always present and ready to promote those ends by his grace: yet notwithstanding, by the voluntary neglect or abuse of these means, (the guides being blind, negligent, unfaithful; or the people being indocile, sluggish, refractory; or both perverted with bad affections,) often ignorance, error, and impiety prevail, love is cool and dead, schisms and factions are rife in the church. Which events are not to be conceived derogatory to God's good-will and good intentions, or to his kind and careful providence toward men; but we are notwithstanding to esteem and acknowledge him the author and donor of those good things; in respect to them no less blessing and praising him, than if they were really accomplished

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by man's concurrence and compliance; he having done his part in that due measure and manner which wisdom prompts; having indeed done the same, as when they are effected. So God having expressly declared, that he would have all men to know and embrace the gospel, having made a universal promulgation thereof, having sent forth apostles to disseminate it every where, having obliged every man to confer his best endeavour toward the propagation thereof; if by the want of fidelity, zeal, or industry in them, to whom this care is intrusted, or upon whom this duty is incumbent; or if by the carelessness and stupidity of those, who do not regard what is done in the world; or if by men's voluntary shutting their eyes, or stopping their ears, (as the Jews did of old to the prophetical instructions and admonitions,) God's heavenly truth becometh not universally known, it is not reasonable to impute this defailance to God, or to conceive him therefore not universally to desire and design men's instruction and salvation consequent thereon. Let me, for the illustration of this matter, put a case, or propound a similitude. Suppose a great kingdom, consisting of several provinces, should have revolted from their sovereign; disclaiming his authority, neglecting and disobeying his laws; that the good prince, out of his goodness and pity toward them, (and upon other good considerations moving him thereto, suppose the mediation of his own son,) instead of prosecuting them with deserved vengeance, should grant a general pardon and amnesty, in these terms, or upon these conditions; that whoever of those rebels willingly should come in, acknowledge his fault, and promise future loyalty, or obedience to

his laws declared to them, should be received into favour, have impunity, enjoy protection, and obtain rewards from him. Further, for the effectuating this gracious intent, suppose that he should appoint and commissionate messengers, empowering and charging them to divulge the purport of this act of grace to all the people of that kingdom. Admit now, that these messengers should go forth and seat themselves only in some provinces of that kingdom, proclaiming this universal pardon (universal as to the design, and as to the tenor thereof) only in those, neglecting others; or that striving to propagate it further, they should be rejected and repelled; or that from any the like cause the knowledge thereof should not reach to some remoter provinces; it is plain, that indeed the effect of that pardon would be obstructed by such a carriage of the affair; but the tenor of that act would not thereby be altered; nor would the failure in execution (consequent upon the ministers' or the people's misbehaviour) detract from the real amplitude of the prince's intent; no more, than the wilful incredulity, refusal, or noncompliance of some persons, where the business is promulged and notified, would prejudice the same. It is plain the prince meant favourably toward all, and provided carefully for them; although by accident (not imputable to him) the designed favours and benefits do not reach all. The case so plainly suits our purpose, that I need not make any application. The holy Fathers do by several like similitudes endeavour to illustrate this matter, and somewhat to assoil the difficulty. They compare our Saviour to the sun[a], who shines indifferently

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[a] Ἀκούσατε οὖν οἱ μακράν· ἀκούσατε οἱ ἐγγύς· οὐκ ἀπεκρύβη τινὰς ὁ

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to all the world, although there be some private corners and secret caves, to which his light doth not come; although some shut their windows or their eyes, and exclude it; although some are blind, and do not see it [b]. That mystical Sun of Righteousness, saith St. Ambrose, is risen to all, came to all, did suffer and rose again for all——but if any one doth not believe in Christ, he defrauds himself of the general benefit. As if one shutting the windows should exclude the beams of the sun, the sun is not therefore not risen to all. [c] They compare our Lord to a physician, who professes to relieve and cure all that shall have recourse to his help; but doth cure only those who seek for remedy, and are willing to take the medicine; because all, saith St. Ambrose again, do not desire cure, but most do shun it, lest the ulcer should smart by medicaments; therefore *volentes curat, non astringit invitos;* he cures only the willing, doth not compel those that are unwilling; they only receive health,

λόγος· φῶς ἐστι κοινὸν, ἐπιλάμπει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· οὐδεὶς Κιμμέριος ἐν λόγῳ. Clem. Alex. Protrep. "Hear ye that are far: hear ye "that are near: the word is not hid to any: it is a common "light: it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian in the "word."

[b] Mysticus Sol ille justitiæ omnibus ortus est, omnibus venit, omnibus passus est, et omnibus resurrexit—si quis autem non credit in Christum, generali beneficio se fraudat, ut si quis clausis fenestris radios solis excludat, non ideo sol non ortus est omnibus, &c. *Amb. in Psal.* cxviii. *Ser.* viii.

Si dies omnibus æqualiter nascitur, et si sol super omnes pari et æquali luce diffunditur, quanto magis Christus Sol et dies verus, in ecclesia sua lumen vitæ æternæ pari æqualitate largitur. *Cypr. Epist.* 76.

[c] Nunquid non medicus idcirco proponit in publico, ut omnes se ostendat velle salvare si velint. *Ambr.* i. tom. 2.

who desire medicine [d]. Evangelical grace, say they, is like a fountain standing openly, to which all men have free access; at which all men may quench their thirst, if they will inquire after it, and go thereto. *The fountain of life*, saith Arnobius, *is open to all; nor is any man hindered or driven from the right of drinking it* [e]. The covenant of grace is, say they, a door standing open to all, whereinto all have liberty to enter—*When an entrance*, saith St. Chrysostom, *being opened to all, and there being nothing that hinders, some being wilfully naught abide without, they have no other but their own wickedness to impute their destruction unto* [f].

And again he puts the question, *If Christ enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, how is it that so many remain unenlightened?* &c. To which he answers, That *if some, wilfully shutting the eyes of their minds, will not receive the beams of this light, it is not from the nature of light that those remain still in darkness, but from the wickedness of those who wilfully deprive themselves of the gift of it*, &c. [g]

[d] Venit—ut vulnera nostra curaret, sed quia non omnes medicinam expetunt, sed plerique refugiunt, ne medicamentis compungatur vis ulceris, ideo volentes, &c. *Ambr. de David.* iii. 11.

[e] Patet omnibus fons vitæ, neque ab jure potandi quisquam prohibetur, aut pellitur. *Arnob.* lib. 2.

[f] Ὅταν τῆς εἰσόδου πᾶσιν ἀνεῳγμένης, καὶ μηδενὸς τοῦ κωλύοντος ὄντος, ἐθελοκακήσαντές τινες ἔξω μένωσι, παρ' οὐδένα ἕτερον, ἀλλ' ἢ παρὰ τὴν οἰκείαν πονηρίαν ἀπόλλυνται. Chrys. in Joh. i. Homil. 7.

[g] Εἰ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον, πῶς ἀφώτιστοι μεμενήκασι τοσοῦτοι; οὐ γὰρ δὴ πάντες ἐπέγνωσαν τοῦ Χριστοῦ τὸ σέβας· πῶς οὖν φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον; τόγε εἰς αὐτὸν ἦκον· εἰ δέ τινες ἑκόντες τοὺς τῆς διανοίας ὀφθαλμοὺς μύσαντες, οὐκ ἐθέλησαν παραδέξασθαι τοῦ φωτὸς τούτου τὰς ἀκτῖνας, οὐ παρὰ τὴν τοῦ φωτὸς φύσιν ἡ σκότωσις ἐκείνοις, ἀλλὰ

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St. Gregory Nazienzen resembles the grace of baptism (as to its community and freedom of use) to the breathing of the air, to the spreading of light, to the vicissitude of seasons, to the aspect of the creation[h]; things most obvious and common to all.

If this answer do not fully satisfy, I adjoin further,

2. That God, beside that ordinary provision, is ready to interpose extraordinarily in disclosing his truth to them who are worthy of such favour, and fit to receive it; and that God's general desire and design of revealing his truth to all men is very well consistent with his providential (not only negative and permissive, but even positive and active) withholding the discovery thereof from some persons, yea some nations; for that neither his wisdom, goodness, or justice might permit him, that he should impart that revelation to such persons whom he seeth altogether indisposed to comply therewith, and unfit to profit thereby; who have extremely abused the lesser graces, and not improved or misimproved the lesser talents afforded them; detained inferior truths in unrighteousness, and *have not liked to retain God in their knowledge*, have therefore justly been delivered up to a reprobate sense; who have so depraved their minds with wicked prejudices and affections, that the truth being offered to them, they would certainly either stupidly neglect it or scornfully reject it; or if admitting it in show, would un-

Rom. i. 18, 28.

παρὰ τὴν κακουργίαν τῶν ἑκοντὶ ἀποστερούντων ἑαυτοὺς τῆς δωρεᾶς· ἡ μὲν γὰρ χάρις εἰς πάντας ἐκκέχυται—πάντως δὲ ὁμοίως προσιεμένη καὶ μετὰ τῆς ἴσης καλοῦσα τιμῆς· οἱ δὲ μὴ θέλοντες ἀπολαῦσαι τῆς δωρεᾶς ταύτης, ἑαυτοῖς δίκαιοι ταύτην ἂν εἶεν λογίσασθαι τὴν πήρωσιν. Chrys. in Joh. i. Homil. 7.

[h] —— ὡς ἀέρος πνεῦσιν, ὡς φωτὸς χύσιν, καὶ ὡρῶν ἀλλαγὰς, καὶ κτίσεως θέαν——. Naz. Orat. 40.

worthily abuse it; so that from the imparting the means of knowing it, no glory to God, no benefit to man would accrue, but rather contempt of God and prejudice to men would ensue upon it: there are some persons of that wicked and *gigantic* disposition, (contracted by evil practice,) that, should one offer to instruct them in truth, or move them to piety, would be ready to say with Polyphemus in Homer, *Odyss. ι'. 273, 4.* SERM. LXXIII. Isa. xxx. 10.

Νήπιος εἶς, ὦ ξεῖν', ἢ τηλόθεν εἰλήλουθας,
Ὅς με θεοὺς κέλεαι ἢ δείδίμεν, ἢ ἀλέασθαι.

Friend, you are a fool, or a great stranger to me,
Who advisest me to fear or regard the Deity.

Or (which is the same) with Pharaoh: *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go,* (or neither will I do as you in God's name admonish me;) who, like that unhappy prince, by no efficacy of arguments, no wonders of power are to be convinced of their folly, or converted from their wickedness: some, like those of Chorazin and Bethsaida, whom not all the powerful discourses spoken to them, all the mighty works done in them, sufficient to have brought Tyre and Sidon to repentance, can induce to mind or obey the truth: unto which sort of people (except upon some particular occasions, and for special reasons) it is not expedient that divine truth should be exposed. We may also observe how our Lord being asked by St. Jude a question like to ours; *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not to the world?* thus resolves it: *If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him:* implying the Exod. v. 2. Prov. i. 24. Luke x. 13. John xiv. 22.

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ordinary reason of God's making a difference in the discoveries of himself to be the previous disposition and behaviours of men toward God; and interpretatively toward our Lord himself.

That God doth commonly observe this method (plainly suitable to divine justice, wisdom, and goodness) to dispense the revelation of his truth according to men's disposition to receive it, and aptness to make a fruitful and worthy use of it, *to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, as St. John Baptist spake; and to withhold it from those who are indisposed to admit it, or unfit to profit by it; we may from divers express passages and notable instances (beside many probable intimations) of scripture learn. We may on the one hand observe, that those whom our Saviour did choose to call, were persons disposed easily upon his call to comply; to forsake their fathers and their nets; to leave their receipts of custom; to relinquish all, (relations, occupations, estates,) and to follow him; faithful Israelites, without guile, like Nathaniel, (that is, as is probably conjectured, St. Bartholomew;) men honestly devout, and charitable, like Zaccheus; that he chose to converse with publicans and sinners, men apt to be convinced of their errors, and touched with the sense of their sins; apt to see their need of mercy and grace, and therefore ready to entertain the overtures of them; that he blesses God for revealing his mysteries to babes, (to innocent and well meaning, imprejudicate and uncorrupted persons,) such as if men were not, they could in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven, or become Christians; those *poor in spirit, of whom is the kingdom of heaven*; those *foolish things* which God chooses as most fit objects of his mercy

Matt. iii. 8. 1 Cor. xii. 7.

Matt. iv. 18. John i. 24, 37. Matt. xix. 27. John i. 47. Luke xix. 8, 9. Matt. xxi. 31. Luke v. 31.

Matt. xviii. 3. xix. 14. v. 3. 1 Cor. i. 27.

and grace; that he enjoined his disciples, in their travels for the promulgation and propagation of the gospel, to inquire concerning the worthiness or fitness of persons, and accordingly to make more close applications to them: *Into what city or village ye enter, inquire who therein is worthy;* and entering in abide there. Of this proceeding we have a notable instance in Cornelius, who for his honest piety (correspondent to the proportion of knowledge vouchsafed him) was so acceptable to God, that in regard thereto he obtained from him the revelation of truth in a peculiar and extraordinary manner. And St. Paul was another most remarkable example thereof; who for the like reason was so wonderfully called, as himself intimates, describing himself to have been ζηλωτὴς Θεοῦ, *zealously affected toward God, according to the righteousness in the law, blameless;* one that had *continually behaved himself with all good conscience toward* God; who even in the persecution of God's truth did proceed with an honest meaning, and according to his conscience, for which cause he saith, that God had mercy on him; foreseeing how willingly he would embrace the truth, and how earnestly promote it. We may also observe, how in the Acts of the Apostles the Holy Spirit commonly directed the apostles to such places, where a competent number of people were well disposed to receive the truth; who were εὖθετοι εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *well disposed to the kingdom of heaven,* and consequently by God's foresight (τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον) *ordained to have the word of eternal life* (the τὸ σωτηρίον Θεοῦ, as it is in a parallel place called) discovered to them: such people as the Bereans, men ingenuous and tractable; who consequently enter-

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Matt. x. 11.

Acts xxii. 3. xxiii. 1. Πεπολίτευμαι. Phil. iii. 6. Acts xxvi. 9. Gal. i. 14.

Acts xxvi. 1 Tim. i. 3.

Luke ix. 62.

Acts xiii. 48. xvii. 11. xxviii. 28.

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tained the word, μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, with all promptitude and alacrity. To such persons God sometimes by extraordinary revelation directed the apostles to preach; as to the Corinthians, in respect to whom the Lord spake to St. Paul in a vision, saying, *Fear not, but speak, and be not silent; for I am with thee, because* πολύς ἐστί μοι λαὸς, *there is for me much people in this city; much people* whom I see disposed to comply with my truth. So in behalf of the Macedonians, ἀνήρ τις Μακεδὼν, *a certain man of Macedonia,* was in a vision seen to St. Paul, *exhorting him and saying, Passing into Macedonia, help us.* Thus on that hand doth God take special care that his truth be manifested to such as are fitly qualified to embrace it and use it well: thus is God ready to make good that answer of Pothinus (bishop of Lions, and immediate successor to St. Irenæus) to the prefect, who asking him *who was the Christians'* *God,* was answered, Ἐὰν ᾖς ἄξιος, γνώσῃ, *If thou be worthy, thou shalt know;* thus, as the Wise Man divinely saith, the divine Wisdom, ἀξίους αὐτῆς περιέρχεται ζητοῦσα, *goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her; sheweth herself favourable unto them in their ways, and meeteth them in every thought.*

Acts xviii. 9, 10.

Acts xvi. 9.

Euseb. v. 1.

Wisd. vi. 16.

And on the other hand, that God withholds the special discoveries of his truth, upon account of men's indispositions and demerits, may likewise very plainly appear. We may suppose our Lord to have observed himself what he ordered to his disciples; *Not to give that which is holy to dogs, nor to cast their pearls before swine,* (not to expose the holy and precious truth to very lewd and fierce people, who would snarl at it and trample upon it:) we may allow God in his dispensation of his truth and

Matt. vii. 6.

grace to do what he bids the apostles to do: before he enters into any house, or applies himself to any person, to examine whether the house or person be worthy, that is, willing to receive him, and apt to treat him well; if not, to decline them. Our Lord, we see, did leave even his own country, seeing men there were not disposed to use him with due honour and regard; seeing they were possessed with vain prejudices, apt to obstruct the efficacy of his divine instructions and miraculous performances; so that he was not likely (according to the ordinary way of divine providence) to produce any considerable effect towards their conversion. *He could not*, it is said, *do many miracles there, because of their unbelief;* he could not, that is, according to the most just and wise rules he did observe, he would not do them; because he perceived the doing them would not conduce to any good purpose; that they were not apt to look upon those works as the effects of divine power and goodness, performed for their benefit, (for inducing them to faith and repentance,) but rather that the doing them would expose God's mercy to contempt or reproach, at least to neglect or disregard. Hence our Saviour declined conversing with persons indisposed to (those ψυχικοὶ, who cannot δέχεσθαι τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος) receive benefit by his instruction and example; to grow wiser or better by his conversation; as the Pharisees and Scribes; men prepossessed with corrupt opinions and vicious affections, obstructive to the belief of his doctrine and observance of his laws; and worldly persons; proud and self-conceited, crafty and deceitful, covetous, ambitious, and worldly men, incorrigibly tinctured with that φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *carnal wisdom and affec-*

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Ἐξετάζετε. Matt. x. 11.

Matt. xiii. 57, 58.

1 Cor. ii. 14.

Matt. xxi. 31.

Rom. viii. 7.

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tion; which *is enmity to God; so that it is not subject to the law of God, nor can be;* inextricably engaged in the friendship of the world, which is enmity to God: to such men the gospel would certainly be a scandal or a folly: they would never be able to relish or digest the doctrine of purity, self-denial, patience, and the like doctrines opposite to carnal sense and conceit which it teacheth. From such wise and prudent men (conceited of their little wisdoms, and doting upon their own fancies) God did conceal those heavenly mysteries, which they would have despised and derided: those *many wise according to the flesh, many powerful, many noble,* God did not choose to call into his church. Accordingly we may observe in the history of the apostles, that God's Spirit did prohibit the apostles passing through some places, it discerning how unsuccessful (at those seasons, in those circumstances, according to those dispositions of men) their preaching would be: *Passing through Phrygia and Galatia, being hindered by the Spirit to speak the word in Asia; coming to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not.* Moreover there is plainly the like reason why God should withhold his saving truth from some people, as why he should withdraw it from others; when it is abused or proves fruitless: but of such withdrawing we have many plain instances, attended with the declaration of the reasons of them: our Lord prophesied thus concerning the Jews; *I say unto you, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation doing the fruits thereof;* they, when our Saviour would have gathered them under his wings, wilfully refusing.

James iv. 4. 1 John ii. 15.

1 Cor. i. 23.

Mat. xi. 25.

1 Cor. i. 26. James ii. 5.

Acts xvi. 6, 7.

Matt. xxi. 43.

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Our Lord charged his disciples, when by any they were repulsed or neglected in their preaching, to leave those persons and places, *shaking off the dust from their feet*, in token of an utter (εἰς μαρτύριον ἐπ' αὐτοὺς) detestation and desertion of them: and accordingly we see them practising in their acts; when they perceived men perversely contradictious, or desperately senseless and stupid, so that they clamoured against the gospel, and thrust it from them, they abstained from further dealing with them, turning their endeavours otherwhere, toward persons of a more docile and ingenuous temper; thence more susceptive of faith and repentance: *To you*, say Paul and Barnabas to the contradicting and reproachful Jews, *it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken; but seeing you put it from you, (or thrust it away from you, ἀπωθεῖσθε αὐτὸν,) and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, we turn to the Gentiles.* So when the church of Ephesus was grown cold in charity, and deficient in good works, God threatens to remove her candlestick; or to withdraw from her that light of truth, which shone with so little beneficial influence. It seems evident that God for the like reasons may withhold the discovery of his truth, or forbear to interpose his providence; so as to transmit light thither, where men's deeds are so evil that they will love darkness rather than light; where their eyes are so dim and weak, that the light will but offend, and by the having it, hurt them; where they, by the having it declared to them, will only incur further mischief and misery; it would prove to them but ὀσμὴ θανάτου, a *deadly scent*, as the most comfortable perfumes are offensive sometimes and

Matt. x. 14. Luke ix. 5. Acts xiii. 51. xviii. 6.

Acts xiii. 46. xxviii. 26.

Rev. ii. 5.

Καὶ γὰρ τὰς ὕς (φασὶ) τὸ μύρον σνίγυ. Chrys. John iii. 19.

2 Cor. ii. 16.

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noxious to distempered bodies. Wherefore as where the light doth shine most clearly, it is men's voluntary pravity, that by it many are not effectually brought to salvation; so it is men's voluntary depraving and corrupting themselves, (misusing their natural light, choaking the seeds of natural ingenuity, thwarting God's secret whispers and motions, complying with the suggestions of the wicked one,) so as to be rendered unmeet for the susception of God's heavenly truth and grace, which hinders God (who proceedeth ordinarily with men, in sweet and reasonable methods, not in way of impetuous violence and coaction) from dispensing them: we may say of such in the words of the prophet, *They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.* Τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ἀγαθότητι πᾶσιν ὁ Κύριος ἐγγίζει· μακρύνομεν δὲ ἑαυτοὺς ἡμεῖς διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας, *God doth by his goodness approach to all, but we set ourselves at distance by sin,* saith St. Basil; and ὅπου αὐτοπροαίρετος πονηρία, ἐκεῖ καὶ ἀποχὴ τῆς χάριτος, *where there is self-chosen or affected wickedness, there is a withholding of grace,* saith another Father, (*apud* Cyrill. Hier.) The *gospel, if it be hidden,* it is, as St. Paul says, *hidden* ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, *in viris perditis, among lost men,* (that is, men desperately gone in wickedness, incorrigible, unreclaimable people,) *in whom the God of this world* (that is, as St. Chrysostom expounds it, not the Devil, but the good God himself) *hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, so that the light of the glorious gospel hath not shined to them,* (πῶς οὖν ἐτύφλωσεν; *how then*

Isa. lxvi. 3. Jer. v. 25. Bas. in Ps. xxxiii. 2 Cor. iv. 3.

Εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγάσαι αὐτούς. Chrys. in 2 Cor. iv. 4.

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did God blind them? saith St. Chrysostom,) οὐκ ἐνεργήσας εἰς τοῦτο, ἄπαγε· *not by any efficacy of his upon them toward that; fie on that;* ἀλλ' ἀφεὶς καὶ συγχωρήσας, *but by permission and concession*; for so the scripture is wont to speak; Ἐπειδὰν γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἠπίστησαν πρῶτοι, καὶ ἀναξίους ἑαυτοὺς κατεσκεύασαν τοῦ ἰδεῖν τὰ μυστήρια, καὶ αὐτὸς λοιπὸν εἴασεν· ἀλλὰ τί ἔδει ποιῆσαι; πρὸς βίαν ἕλκειν, καὶ ἐκκαλύπτειν μὴ βουλομένοις ἰδεῖν; ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἂν κατεφρόνησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἂν εἶδον. *Seeing*, saith he, *they disbelieved first, and constituted themselves unworthy to see the mysteries, even God at last let them alone; for what should he have done? Should he have drawn them violently, and discovered it to them being unwilling to see? They would then have more despised it, and not have seen it.* God is ever willing and ready to dispense his mercies and favours, but he is not wont to do it extraordinarily, (or beside the course of his ordinary provision,) but in a proper and fit season, (in that καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, *acceptable time and day of salvation*, when he seeth men capable of receiving them;) which season commonly dependeth upon man's will and choice, or the results of them. Καβόλου γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς οἶδεν τούς τε ἀξίους τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ μή· ὅθεν τὰ προσήκοντα ἑκάστοις δίδωσιν. Σωτὴρ γάρ ἐστιν· οὐχὶ τῶν μὲν, τῶν δ' οὔ· πρὸς δὴ ὅσον ἐπιτηδειότητος ἕκαστος εἶχεν, τὴν ἑαυτοῦ διένειμεν ἐνέργειαν· for (saith Clemens Alex. in his 7th of the Stromata, where he clearly and fully affirms our present doctrine) *Our Lord is not the Saviour of some and not of others: but, according as men are fitly disposed, he hath distributed his beneficence to all.* St. Augustine himself somewhere speaketh no less; or rather more: *Præcedit aliquid in peccatoribus*, saith he, *quo, quamvis nondum*

Luke xix. 44. 2 Cor. vi. 2. Rom. iii. 11.

Clem. Strom. vii. p. 105.

Quæst. 68. e Quæst. 83. tom. iv. part. i. Venit de

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sint justificati, digni efficiantur justificatione: et idem præcedit in aliis peccatoribus quo digni sint obtusione. But,

occultissimis meritis, &c. *Ibid.*

3. If all these considerations do not thoroughly satisfy us concerning the reason of God's proceedings in this case, we may consider that God's providence is inscrutable and impenetrable to us; that, according to the Psalmist, as *God's mercy is in the heavens, and his faithfulness reacheth to the clouds;* so *his righteousness is like the great mountains,* (too high for our reason to climb,) *and his judgments,* πολλὴ ἄβυσσος, a great abyss, too deep for our feeble understanding to fathom; that his ways are more subtile and spiritual than to be traced by our dim and gross sight. So upon contemplation of a like case, although, as it seems, hardly so obscure or unaccountable as this, the case concerning God's conditional rejection of that people, whom he in a special manner had so much and so long favoured, St. Paul himself doth profess. That therefore although we cannot fully resolve the difficulty, we notwithstanding without distrust should adhere to those positive and plain declarations, whereby God representeth himself seriously designing and earnestly desiring, *that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth; that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance;* not doubting but his declared mind, and his secret providence, although we cannot thoroughly discern or explain their consistency, do yet really and fully conspire. But no further at this time.

Psal. xxxvi. 6.

Rom. xi. 33.

2 Pet. iii. 9.

SERMON LXXIV.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

1 Tim. iv. 10.

——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

8. As our Saviour was such to all men by his doctrine, or the general discovery of all saving truth; so may he be esteemed such in regard to his exemplary practice; whereby upon the open stage of the world, and in the common view of all that would attend unto him, he did represent a living pattern of all goodness; by imitating which, we may certainly attain salvation. He that will consider his practice shall find it admirably fitted for general instruction and imitation; calculated for all places and all sorts of people; suited to the complexions, to the capacities, to the degrees, to the callings of all men; so that every sort of men may from it draw profitable direction, may in it find a copy, even of his particular behaviour: for he was a great Prince, illustrious in birth, excellent in glory, and abounding in all wealth; yet was born in obscurity, lived without pomp, and seemed to possess nothing; so teaching men of high rank to be sober, mild, and humble; not to rest in, not to regard much, not to hug and cling to the accommodations and shows of worldly state; teaching

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those of mean degree to be patient, content, and cheerful in their station. He was exceedingly wise and knowing, without bound or measure; yet made no ostentation of extraordinary knowledge, of sharp wit, of deep subtilty; did not vent high, dark, or intricate notions; had in his practice no reaches and windings of craft or policy; but was in his doctrine very plain and intelligible, in his practice very open and clear; so that what he commonly said or did, not only philosophers and statesmen, but almost the simplest idiots might easily comprehend; so that those might thence learn not to be conceited of their superfluous wisdom; these not to be discouraged in their harmless ignorance; both having thence an equally sufficient instruction in all true righteousness, a complete direction in the paths to happiness, being thereby σοφιζόμενοι εἰς σωτηρίαν, made wise and learned to salvation. He did not immerse himself in the cares, nor engage himself into the businesses of this world; yet did not withdraw himself from the company and conversation of men: he retired often from the crowd, that he might converse with God and heavenly things; he put himself into it, that he might impart good to men, and benefit the world, declining no sort of society; but indifferently conversing with all; disputing with the doctors, and eating with the publicans; whence thereby both men of contemplative and quiet dispositions or vocations, and men of busy spirits, or of active lives, may be guided respectively; those not to be morose, supercilious, rigid, contemptuous toward other men; these not to be so possessed or entangled with the world, as not to reserve some leisure for the culture of their minds, not to employ some care upon the duty of piety and

2 Tim. iii. 15.

devotion; both may learn, whether in private retirements, or in public conversation and employment, especially to regard the service of God and the benefit of men: thus was the example of our Lord accommodated for all men; especially conducting them in the hardest and roughest parts of the way leading to bliss, the acclivities and asperities of duty; self-denial, or neglect of worldly glory and fleshly pleasure, patience, humility, general charity; shewing us the possibility of performing such duties, and encouraging us thereto. Through these difficult and dangerous passages (as a resolute chieftain of life) he undauntedly marched before us, charging, beating back, and breaking through all opposite forces, all enemies, all temptations, all obstacles; enduring painfully the most furious assaults of the world; boldly withstanding and happily conquering the most malicious rage of hell; so that victory and salvation we shall be certain of, if we pursue his steps, and do not basely (out of faintness or falsehood) desert so good a leader; we shall not fail of the unfading crown, if *with patience we run the race that is set before us, looking unto the Captain and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus, who, for the joy proposed unto him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Would it not raise and inflame any courage to see his commander to adventure so boldly upon all hazards, to endure so willingly all hardships? Whom would not the sight of such a forerunner animate and quicken in his course; who, by running in the straight way of righteousness with alacrity and constancy, hath obtained himself a most glorious crown, and holdeth forth another like there-

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Αρχηγὸς ζωῆς. Acts iii. 15.

1 Pet. ii. 21.

Heb. xii. 2.

1 Pet. v. 4. Ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον. —στέφανος ζωῆς.

Rev. ii. 10. Jam. i. 12.

Πρόδρομος. Heb. vi. 20.

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to, for the reward of those who follow him? Now as our Lord's doctrine, so did his example, in the nature and design thereof, respect and appertain to all men, it being also like the light of heaven, a common spectacle, a public guide, *to guide our steps in the way of peace:* if it do not appear so, if it do not effectually direct all, it is by accident and beside God's intention; it is by the fault of them who should propound it, or of them who have not eyes fit or worthy to behold it; briefly, what was said concerning the universal revelation of Christian doctrine may be applied to Christ's practice.

9. Jesus is *the Saviour of all men,* as having combated and vanquished all the enemies of man's welfare and happiness; dispossessing them of all their pretences and usurpations over man, disarming them of all their power and force against him; enabling us to withstand and overcome them. Man's salvation hath many adversaries of different nature and kind; some directly oppugning it, some formally prejudicing it, some accidentally hindering it; some alluring, some forcing, some discouraging from it, or from the means conducing to it: the chief of them we may from the scripture (with consent of experience) reckon to be the *Devil,* with all his envy and malice, his usurpations, his delusions, and his temptations to sin; the *world,* with its snares and baits, its violences, persecutions, and menaces; the *flesh,* or natural concupiscence, with its bad inclinations and propensities to evil, its lusts and pleasures; *sin,* with its guilt, and mischievous consequences; the *law,* with its rigorous exactions, hard measure, and harsh boding; *conscience,* with its accusations and complaints, its terrors and anguishes; *divine*

anger, with its effects, *death* and *hell*. [a]All these our Lord hath in several and suitable ways defeated; as to their malignity, contrariety, or enmity in respect of man's salvation; he hath, as Zachariah prophesieth in his Benedictus, *saved us from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us: so that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might* (ἀφόβως) *safely and securely, without danger or fear, serve him, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.* SERM. LXXIV. Luke i. 71, 74.

The *Devil*, (that *enemy*, that *adversary*, that *accuser*, that *slanderer*, that *murderer*, that *greedy lion*, that *crafty serpent*, the *strong one*, the *mischievous one*, the *destroyer*,) who usurped an authority and exercised a domination over mankind, as *the prince of this world*; who made prize of them, *captivated them at his pleasure*; who detained them under the power (or authority) of darkness and wickedness; who had the power of death; him our Saviour hath destroyed or defeated, (κατήργησεν, as the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh; that is, abolished him as to any further pretence of empire or power over us;) him he hath dejected from heaven, (*I saw Satan like lightning falling down from heaven*;) him *he hath cast out: Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out:* all *his works he hath dissolved: For this cause*, saith St. John, *the Son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the Devil.* He combated *this strong one*, (this mighty and dreadful foe of ours,) and baffled him, and bound him, and disarmed him, (taking Matt. xiii. 28. Luke xi. 19. 1 Pet. v. 8. Dragon, Rev. xii. 3, &c. Acts x. 38. 1 John ii. 14. Rev. xii. 9. John xii. 31. xiv. 30. xvi. 11. Ephes. ii. 2. vi. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Coloss. i. 13. Acts xxvi. 18. x. 38. 2 Tim. ii. 26. Heb. ii. 14. Luke x. 18. John xii. 31. xvi. 11. 1 John iii. 8. Matt. xii. 29.

[a]—ὁ Χριστὸς οὐδὲν τῆς ἰδίας ποιήσεως προσκατέλιπε τῷ ἄρχοντι τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. Athan. contra Apoll. p. 628.

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away παντοπλίαν αὐτοῦ, *the whole armour* in which he trusted,) and *spoiled him*, (τὰ σκεύη διήρπασε, *rifled all his baggage*, bare away all his instruments of mischief,) and plundered all his house; leaving him unable (without our fault, our baseness, our negligence) to do us mischief, (as is intimated in the 12th of St. Matthew and 11th of St Luke;) yea, *he triumphed over* all those infernal principalities and powers, and exposed them, as St. Paul saith: he imparted to his disciples ability to *trample upon all his power*, by him all his followers are so fortified as *to conquer the wicked one*, as St. Johnsays: he affordeth light to discover *all his wiles and snares*, strength and courage *to withstand all his assaults*, *to repel all his fiery darts, to put him to flight.*

Luke xi. 21, 22.
Coloss. ii. 15.
διεγμάτευσεν,
Luke x. 19.
1 John ii. 14.
Eph. vi. 11.
2 Cor. ii. 11.
Eph. vi. 16.
1 Pet. v. 9.
Eph. iv. 27.
Jam. iv. 7.

The *world* also (that is, the wicked principles, the bad customs, the naughty conversation and example which commonly prevail here among men; alluring to evil and deterring from good; the cares also, the riches, the pleasures, the glories of the world, which possess or distract the minds, satiate and cloy the desires, employ all the affections and endeavours, take up the time of men; all in the world which fasteneth our hearts to earth, and to these low transitory things; or which sink them down toward hell; and which detain them from soaring toward heaven) is an enemy, an irreconcileable enemy to our salvation; the friendship thereof being inconsistent with a friendship in us toward the God of our salvation; or in him toward us: for *the friendship of the world is enmity with God;* and, *If any man love the world, the friendship of the Father is not in him.* And this enemy our Lord hath vanquished, and enabled us to overcome. *Be of cou-*

Jam. iv. 4.
1 John ii. 15.
John xvi. 33.

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rage, saith he, *I have overcome the world: he,* by a constant self-denial and temperance, defeated the bewitching pleasures and flattering glories of it; *he,* by an immoveable patience, baffled the terrible frowns and outrageous violences of it; *he,* by a resolute and invincible maintenance of truth, in great measure routed and dissipated the errors and oppositions thereof; *he,* by a general and intense charity, surmounted the provocations, envies, and enmities thereof; *he* did it himself for us, and *he* also enabled us to do it; furnishing us with sufficient strength, and fit weapons, whereby we may combat and conquer it; may sustain and repel its force; may shun and elude its baits; for, *every one that* (by faith in him) *is born of God doth overcome the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith. Who is he that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* 1 John v. 4, 5.

In all these things (that is, in whatever concerns the world and its enmity: *tribulation,* or *distress,* or *persecution,* or *famine,* or *nakedness,* or *peril,* or *sword,*) *we are,* saith St. Paul, *more than conquerors through him that loves us; thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ:* Rom. viii. 38. 2 Cor. ii. 14. Phil. i. 28.

our Lord hath procured for us hopes that will raise our minds and affections above the world; objects employing our care and endeavour far beyond it; satisfactions that will cheer our hearts, and satiate our desires without it; comforts that will support and sustain our spirits against all the terrors, all the assaults, all the evils thereof; by his means it is, that we have no reason either to love it, or to fear it, or to value it, or to be concerned about it; but to contemn it as a thing unworthy of us and below us.

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The *flesh* also (that is, all that within us of bodily temper, or natural constitution, which inclineth and swayeth us to vicious excess in sensual enjoyments; which disposeth us to the inordinate love of ourselves, and of other creatures; which *lusts against the spirit*, and is adversary thereto; which blindeth and darkeneth our minds in the apprehension of our judgment concerning divine things; which perverteth and disableth (enfeebleth) our wills in the choice and prosecution of what is good; which discomposeth and disordereth the affections and passions of our soul; which continually enticeth and seduceth us to sin) is also an enemy; a very powerful, very treacherous, very dangerous, and very mischievous enemy to us and our welfare; rendering us enemies to God, (for *the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,*) being *another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and captivating us to the law of sin;* engendering and fostering those *fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;* whose works and fruits are all sorts of intemperance, impurity, pride, envy, contentiousness: this capital enemy of ours our Lord did in his own person first subdue, rejecting all the suggestions and thwarting the impulses thereof; entirely submitting to and performing the will of God; even in willingly drinking that cup, which was so distasteful, so grievous to natural will and fleshly desire. He so conquered the flesh in himself for us; he also conquers it in us, by the guidance and assistance of his grace enabling us to withstand it, and to overcome it. *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus,* saith St. Paul, *hath freed me from the law of sin*

Gal. v. 24.
1 Cor. ii. 14.
Matt. xxvi. 41.
Gal. v. 17.
Rom. vii. 18, 19.
Jam. i. 14.
Rom. viii. 7.
Rom. vii. 23.
1 Pet. ii. 11.
Gal. v. 19.
1 Cor. iii. 3.
Col. iii. 5.
Luke xxii. 42. Matt. xxvi. 39.
John xvii. 19.
Heb. ii. 10.
Rom. viii. 2.

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and death. He infuses a light discussing those fogs which stream from carnal sense and appetite; so that we may clearly discern divine truths, the will of God, the way to happiness: he inserteth principles of spiritual life and strength, counterpoising and overswaying corporeal and sensual propensions; so that we can restrain sensual desires, and compose irregular passions, and submit readily to God's will, and observe cheerfully God's law, and freely comply with the dictates of the Spirit, or of right reason; he so continually aideth, encourageth, and upholds us that we *can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth* us; so that by his power and help *the flesh with its affections and lusts are crucified;* the *earthly members are mortified; the old man* (*which was corrupted according to deceitful lusts*) *is put off; the body of sin is so destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; sin doth not reign in our mortal bodies, so that we* (must) *obey it in the lusts thereof; we are renewed in the spirit of our minds;* and *do put on the new man, which is created according to God in righteousness and true holiness.*

2 Cor. iv. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 15. 1 John ii. 27. Eph. v. 8. Rom. xii. 2. 1 John v. 3. Phil. ii. 13. Phil. iv. 13. 2 Cor. iii. 5. Heb. xiii. 21. Gal. v. 24. Coloss. iii. 5. ii. 11. Eph. iv. 22. Rom. vi. 6, 12. viii. 13. Heb. xii. 1. Eph. iv. 23. ii. 10. Coloss. iii. 10.

Our *sins* also are very grievous enemies of ours, loading us with heavy guilt, stinging us with bitter remorse and anxious fear, keeping us under miserable bondage, exposing us to extreme mischief and misery; them our Lord hath also routed and vanquished: in regard to this performance was the name Jesus assigned to him; as the angel told Joseph: *She shall bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins:* [*From their sins;* taking in all the causes and the consequences of them; from all those spiritual enemies

Heb. xii. 4. Πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι. Matt. i. 21. 1 Tim. i. 15.

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which draw us or drive us into them[b]; from the guilt and obnoxiousness to punishment, the terror and anguish of conscience, the wrath and displeasure of God following upon them, the slavery under their dominion, the final condemnation and sufferance of grievous pains for them;] the guilt of sin he particularly freed us from: for *he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.* Christ died for sinners, (for us then being sinners,) that is, that he might deliver us from our sins, with all their causes, adjuncts, and consequences. *He bare our sins in his own body on the tree; the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin; he is the propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world; he was manifested to take away our sins; once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin* (εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας, *to the abolition of sin*) *by the sacrifice of himself*; we are *justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; by his obedience many are constituted righteous,* (or free from the guilt and imputation of sin;) *he justifies the ungodly; covering their sins,* and *not imputing them unto them.* So doth he wipe away the guilt of sin; and he voids the condemnation passed for them; for *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus: who is there that can condemn, since Christ hath died, or rather hath risen again?*

Rev. i. 5. 1 Pet. i. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 24. iii. 18. 1 John i. 7. ii. 2. iii. 5. iv. 10. Heb. i. 3. ix. 26, 28. Rom. iii. 24. v. 19. Rom. iv. 5, 6, 7. Rom. viii. 1, 34.

He hath also appeased God's wrath for sin, and removed the effects of it, (the punishment and ven-

[b] Ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν τῷ γένει τῶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου πάθους πληρεστάτην ἀπέδωκε τὴν σωτηρίαν, ἵνα ὅλον τὸν ἄνθρωπον ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἐνεχόμενον πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἐλευθερώσῃ. Damasus Epist. apud Theod. v. 9

geance due to sin and threatened for it:) so that *being enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ:* Jesus is the ὁ ῥυόμενος, *who delivers us from the wrath to come; being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath.* SERM. LXXIV. Rom. v. 10, 1. 1 Thess. i. 10. Rom. v. 9.

The strength and dominion of sin he hath also broken, by the grace afforded us, whereby we are able to resist and avoid it: so that *sin henceforth shall not domineer over us, or reign in our mortal body: Being freed from sin, we are enslaved to righteousness, and made servants to God. The body of sin is destroyed, so that we no longer serve sin.* Whence consequently he hath subdued, utterly weakened, or quite destroyed (as to any force or mischievous influence upon us) those other adversaries, which depend upon sin, and by its power oppose and afflict us. Rom. vi. 14, 12, 18, 22, 6.

Our *conscience* is such an enemy accusing us, condemning us, vexing us with the memory and sense of sin; suggesting to us the depth of our guilt, and the danger of our state, terrifying us with the expectation of punishment and vengeance: but our Lord (by securing us of mercy and favour upon repentance and sincere obedience) hath silenced and stilled this adversary; hath *by his blood,* as the apostle to the Hebrews says, *purged our conscience from dead works; hath delivered them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage;* so that thence we obtain a steady peace of mind, a joyful satisfaction in the service of God, a comfortable hope of future bliss: *peace, comfort,* and *joy* are the adjuncts of that state he shall put us Heb. ix. 14. Heb. ii. 15. Rom. xv. 13. xiv. 17. Gal. v. 22.

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into, and the fruits of that Spirit he bestoweth on us.

Gal. ii. 16. iii. 11. Heb. vii. 19. Rom. x. 5. viii. 3. Gal. iii. 12. v. 3. Rom. vii. 13. iv. 15. iii. 20. v. 20. vii. 7, 8, 10, 11. 1 Cor. xv. 56. 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9.

The *law* also (in its rigour, as requiring exact obedience, and as denouncing vengeance to them who in any point violate it) is, by reason of our weakness and inability so perfectly to observe it, an enemy to us; justifying no man, perfecting no man, causing, increasing, aggravating, *quickening*, *declaring* sin; *yielding occasion to sin of killing us*, *working wrath*, *ministering death and condemnation*, *subjecting us to a curse*, as St. Paul teacheth us: but our Lord, by mitigating and abating the extreme rigour thereof, by procuring an acceptance of sincere (though not accurate) obedience, by purchasing and dispensing pardon for transgression thereof upon repentance, by conferring competent strength and ability to perform it in an acceptable degree, hath brought under this adversary; hath *redeemed us from the curse of the law*; hath *justified and imputed righteousness to us without the works of the law*, (without such punctual performances as the law exacts:) we are *delivered from the law*, (as to those effects of it; the condemning, discouraging, enslaving us,) we cease to be under the law, (in those respects,) being under grace, being led by the Spirit, as St. Paul tells us. The law indeed is still our rule, our guide, our governor; we are obliged to follow and obey it: but it ceases to be a tyrant over us, a tormentor of us.

Gal. iii. 13. Rom. iii. 21, 28. iv. 6. vii. 6, 4. vi. 14. Gal. v. 18.

1 Cor. xv. 26.

Death is also an enemy, (*The last enemy*, saith St. Paul, *which shall be destroyed, is death*,) the enemy, which naturally we most fear and abominate; that which would utterly destroy us.

Acts ii. 24.

This enemy our Lord hath vanquished and de-

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stroyed: by his death and resurrection he opened the way to a happy immortality; *he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel: He* by his *death defeated him that had the power of death; and delivered them, who by fear of death were through their whole life subject to bondage;* he pulled out sin, which is the sting of death, and reversed the sentence of condemnation, to which we all stood obnoxious. *The wages of sin* (that which we had deserved, and was by law due to us for it) *was death; but the gift of God is everlasting life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

1 Cor. xv. 20. Acts xxvi. 23. Col. i. 18. Rev. i. 5. Acts iii. 15. Ἀρχηγὸν ζωῆς. 2 Tim. i. 10. Heb. ii. 14. Rom. vi. 23.

Lastly, *hell,* (that is, *utter darkness,* extreme discomfort, intolerable and endless misery,) the most dismal of all enemies, our Lord hath, by the virtue of his merits, and the power of his grace, put us into a capacity of avoiding; *He hath,* as St. Paul before told us, *delivered us from the wrath to come. O hell, where is thy victory? Death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire.*

1 Thess. i. 10. 1 Cor. xv. 55. Rev. xx. 14.

Thus hath our Lord in our behalf vanquished and defeated every thing that is opposite or prejudicial to our salvation and welfare. Many indeed of these things do in a more immediate, more peculiar, and more signal manner concern the faithful members of the Christian church, and are directly applied to them; yet all of them in some sort, according to God's design, and in respect to a remote capacity, may be referred to *all men.* They are benefits which God intended for *all men,* and which *all men* (if they be not faulty and wanting to themselves) may obtain. How they more especially appertain to the faithful, we may shew afterward.

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APPLICATION.

1. Hence ariseth great matter and cause of glorifying God; both from the thing itself and its extent; for the magnitude of beneficence is to be estimated, not only according to the degree of quality, but according to its amplitude of object: to redeem any doth signify goodness, to redeem many doth increase it, to redeem all doth advance it to the highest pitch; the more are obliged, the greater is the glory due to the benefactor.

Hence the *earth being full of the goodness of the Lord, the Lord being gracious unto all, and his mercy being over all his works,* all creatures partaking of God's bounty, is so often insisted upon in those divine hymns, as a ground of praise to God.

Some do indeed speak of glorifying God for his discriminating grace, as if grace the narrower it were the better it were: but is not selfishness and envy at the bottom of this? Is not this the disposition of those in the gospel, who *murmured——is thine eye evil because mine is good?*

It is dangerous to restrain God's benevolence and beneficence within bounds narrower than they really are; thereby diminishing his glory.

2. Hereby is discovered the general obligation of men to love God; to praise him, to serve him in sense of his goodness, in regard to his beneficence, out of gratitude toward him. If God hath been so kindly affected toward men, and so careful of their welfare, as for procuring and promoting their salvation to provide a Saviour for them, to design his own beloved Son to that performance, in prosecution thereof depressing him into so low a state, exposing

him to such inconveniences and indignities, such crosses and afflictions, how much are then all men obliged to love him, as their gracious friend and benefactor; to praise and celebrate him for his favour and mercy, to render all blessings and thanks unto him! This certainly is the duty of all, if the redemption in God's design reach to all; otherwise in reality it lieth on few, in practice it could scarce touch any. They cannot be obliged to thank God for their redemption, who are not obliged to him for the thing itself; they cannot heartily resent the kindness, who are not assured that it extends to them: and to such assurance (according to the doctrine of particular redemption) it is certain that very few men, especially of the best men, can arrive; it is a question whether any men arrive thereto.

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Rev. v. 9. Eph. i. 6. Col. i. 12.

According to the sense of all men, it is also no easy thing to know certainly, whether a man at present be in the state of grace: and he that doth not know that, cannot (except upon the score of general redemption) be assured that he is redeemed; and therefore cannot thank God.

It hath been the common doctrine of Christendom for fifteen hundred years together, that no man (without a special revelation) can in this life be assured of his perseverance, and consequently not of his salvation; and consequently not of his election or redemption, in case only they who are saved are in the design of God redeemed: no man therefore, without that special revelation, can thank God heartily for his redemption, as being uncertain thereof, it being a secret reserved in God's breast.

It is yet a further difficulty, supposing a man to

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have a good assurance of his present state, to be assured of his final perseverance in it: which he that hath not, cannot (except upon the said score) thank God for it.

The best men especially, who, out of modesty and humility, are apt to doubt of their present state; who studying their hearts, and discovering many imperfections in themselves; who reflecting on their lives, and observing in them many defects, are apt to question whether they are qualified for God's favour, or fitted for the future account and enjoyment of heaven; who considering the treachery of their hearts, the feebleness of their reason, that unsteadiness of their resolution, will be apt to fear they may fall away, will be rendered hence uncapable to give God thanks for their redemption: only the bold and blind bayards (who usually out of self-conceit are so exceedingly confident of their election and salvation) will be able to praise God for it.

Hence the assurance of salvation happening to few, and of them to much fewer upon good grounds; it being necessary to none, it being perhaps (yet far more probably, according to the general sense of Christendom) groundless to any; few or none are capable to render God praise and thanks for it: so shall he lose in effect all thanks for the greatest benefit he did ever confer on mankind.

It is therefore a dangerous opinion, which checketh their gratitude, which stoppeth their mouths from praising God, which so depriveth God of his due praise. It is much more safe to praise God for the benefits we conceive we have, but have not, than to neglect to praise him for that we have.

3. This doctrine doth afford great matter of com-

fort. If a man reflecting on his own heart and ways (observing in them many blemishes and defects) is apt to be discouraged, yet it will raise him to consider, that he is not thereby excluded from a possibility of salvation, seeing he is assured of God's favourable inclination, and who hath expressed so much good-will and favour toward him in his redemption; seeing he is persuaded, that he hath a Saviour so kindly and pitifully affected toward him; who wisheth him well; who is concerned in his salvation, that he might not be crossed or defeated in his designs, that he might not lose the effects of his endeavours, the price of his blood. But he that seeth himself in so doubtful a condition, as to his own qualifications, and withal hath no assurance that God was ever graciously disposed toward him, cannot but thereby be much discouraged. SERM. LXXIV.

This doctrine therefore is safe and useful; it can do no man harm; it may do him great good, by giving him hopes of being assisted and accepted by his Redeemer. But the other is dangerous, as tending to discourage and deject men.

4. This doctrine is a great incitement to the performance of duty; both as working upon men's ingenuity, and disposing them in gratitude to serve God, from the resentment of their obligation for so great a favour; and as assuring them of acceptance in case of endeavour to obey. How can he but be moved willingly to serve God, who hath an apprehension of God's such merciful design to save him? of his having done so much in order thereto?

But how can he be moved to serve God in consideration of such a benefit, who is ignorant of its being intended him? How can any man apply him-

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self cheerfully to serve that master, whose favourable inclination toward him, whose readiness to accept his service, he doubteth of?

1 Cor. vi. 20. 1 Pet. i. 17. The apostles propound it as a ground of gratitude, and an obligation to the performance of duty, that they are redeemed by Christ; which supposeth they do all know and believe it.

Supposing Christ is not the Redeemer of all, but of those only who shall be finally saved, these grounds of thankfulness and enforcements of duty cannot properly or pertinently respect all Christians, and indeed only those who are sure of their salvation.

My thanking Christ for his redeeming me, my diligently serving him as my Redeemer, supposeth my opinion, and is grounded upon the truth of his being really so:—I cannot heartily, confidently, or comfortably do it, except I know it, and am assured thereof; which I cannot do, except Christ died for all men, or that I am assured of my particular election.

So that either Christ is an universal Saviour, or the greatest part of Christians are disobliged and incapacitated reasonably to thank him, to praise him, to serve him, as they are enjoined to do.

5. It is a great aggravation of infidelity, of apostasy, of all disobedience, that we are guilty of them, do frustrate the designs and undertakings of Christ, do reject the overtures of his grace, do abuse the goodness and mercy of their Redeemer; it consequently deterreth from those things.

Luke vii. 30. *The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God toward them;* (God therefore designed their good.)

Heb. ii. 3. *How shall we escape that neglect so great sal-*

vation? A salvation which they were capable of, which was designed for them, which was offered to them; otherwise there would have been no danger in neglecting it, no fault in doing it. SERM. LXXIV.

It is said of the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, that *they did ἀπωθεῖσθαι, thrust away the gospel, (the word of salvation,* that was sent them,) *judging themselves unworthy of eternal life:* God did think fit out of goodness seriously to offer it to them, but they did not think fit to embrace it. Acts xiii. 26, 46.

Despisest thou the riches of God's goodness? How can any man despise that which doth not concern him, which never was offered him, which at least he hath no ground of confidence that it extendeth to him? 2 Pet. iii. 9. Rom. ii. 4.

These things I speak that ye may be saved: so our Lord saith to those——*who did not believe in him.* John v. 34, 38.

How often have I willed, &c. . . Matt. xxiii. 37.

Denying the Lord that bought them. 2 Pet. ii. 1.

6. It is a great encouragement and excitement to devotion. Who can be backward of having recourse to his Redeemer, or of using his mediation? Whom will not such an experiment of goodness invite and encourage?

But the contrary apprehension must needs damp devotion, and discourage from it. He can apply himself to God but faintly and distrustfully, who distrusteth whether he hath any Redeemer or Mediator, or no; who must thus conceive and say to himself: Perhaps God hath loved me, and perhaps he never had nor will have any regard to my welfare. Perhaps Christ died with intention to do me good; perhaps he never did mean any such thing.

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Perhaps those expressions of kindness sounding so generally do not include me; perhaps I am excluded, and only deluded by them. When a man cannot say to Christ, O my Saviour!—O my Mediator! &c. nor use his intercession with God for the procurement of faith, of grace, of any good thing.

7. It is a ground and motive of charity; there arising thence a more considerable relation between all men; being all the objects of Christ's love and mercy should endear men to one another; it rendereth every man valuable in our eyes, as dear and precious in God's sight. It should make his salvation desirable to us.

Pray for all men, saith St. Paul.

The contrary opinion removeth this ground of charity; and so cooleth it.

8. It should consequently render us careful to promote the salvation of others, and fearful to hinder it by ill example, by ill doctrine, by any misbehaviour. So doth St. Paul argue, when he saith, *Destroyest thou him for whom Christ died?*

9. It is a piece of justice to acknowledge the right and interest of every man in his Saviour.

A wrong to exclude any; to confine and appropriate this great blessing; to engross, to inclose a common; to restrain that by forging distinctions, which is so unlimitedly expressed.

The undertakings and performances of our Saviour did respect all men, as the common works of nature do; as the air we breathe in, as the sun which shineth on us; the which are not given to any man particularly, but to all generally; not as a proper inclosure, but as a common—they are indeed mine,

but not otherwise than as they do belong to all men. SERM. LXXIV.

A gift they are to all equally, though they do not prove to all a blessing; there being no common gift, which by the refusal, neglect, or ill use of it may not prove a curse—*a savour of death.*

SERMON LXXV.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY.

LUKE ii. 10.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people[a].

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THE proper business of a festival is spiritual joy, conceived in our hearts by reflection on some notable blessing conferred on us; accompanied with a grateful sense and expression, answerable to the special bounty and mercy of God, in due proportion to the nature and degree of that blessing.

1 Thess. v. 16. Rom. xii. 12. Phil. iv. 4.

Such joy is a duty, or a part of religious devotion, required by God, and very acceptable to him: for as God would have his servants perpetually content, well satisfied, and cheerful in all states, and upon all occurrences; so he doth especially demand from us, that we should entertain his favours with delight and complacence; it being proper, it being seemly, it being just, so to do: for since joy is a natural result of our obtaining whatever we do apprehend good, or esteem and affect; the conception of it is a plain argument, that we do well understand, do rightly prize, do cordially like, do thankfully em-

[a] Ἰδοὺ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην, ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ.

brace God's favours; as, on the contrary, a defect of it doth imply, that we do not mind them, or take them to be little worth, that we do not sensibly relish them, or accept them kindly. And if ever we are obliged, if ever we are concerned so to rejoice, then surely it is now; when the fairest occasion and highest cause of joy that ever was is presented to us; when certain news from heaven, and the best that ever came from thence, of the most admirable, the most glorious, the most beneficial event, that ever happened in the world, is in a manner suitably rare conveyed to us; for, *Behold*, saith the angel, *I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.* SERM. LXXV.

Upon which words (each whereof is emphatical, and pregnant with matter observable) we shall first make a brief descant, or paraphrase, supplying the room of a curious analysis; then we shall urge the main duty couched in them.

Ἰδού, *Behold:* This is a word denoting *admiration*, exciting *attention*, intimating *assurance: Behold*, and *admire;* it is no mean, no ordinary matter, that I report, but a most remarkable, a very marvellous event: *Behold*, and *attend;* it is a business not to be passed over with small regard, but most worthy your consideration, of high moment and concernment to you. *Behold* and *see;* it is no uncertain, no obscure thing; but that whereof you may be fully assured, as if it were most evident to your sense, and which by conspicuous proofs shall be demonstrated; in the mean while you have no slight authority for it: for

Εὐαγγελίζομαι, *I bring good tidings; I*, an angel, a special messenger of God purposely sent on this

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errand, that by the strangeness of my apparition I may excite you to regard it, by the weight of my testimony I may incline you to believe it, by the dignity of my nature I may declare the importance of it; *I*, a faithful servant of God, and a kind friend to men, very willing at his command to perform good offices to them, do bring a message well becoming an angel's mouth, worth my descent from heaven, and putting on this visible shape: for *I bring*

Εὐαγγελίζομαι χαρὰν μεγάλην, *good tidings of great joy:* I bring *tidings* that may gratify the curiosity of any man, the mind of man naturally being greedy of news: *good tidings;* those are welcome to all men, and apt to yield more pleasure than any knowledge we had before: tidings *of joy;* such as may not only minister a dry satisfaction to your reason, but sensibly touch your affections, by the comfortable nature and beneficial tendency of them: tidings of *great joy;* as not touching any indifferent or petty business, but affairs of nearest concernment and highest consequence to you: (such, indeed, as you shall understand, which do concern not the poor interests of this world, not the sorry pleasures of sense, not any slender advantage of your present life and temporal state; but your spiritual welfare, your everlasting condition, the future joy and happiness of your souls;) *tidings*, indeed, the most gladsome that ever sounded upon earth, that ever entered into mortal ear: these *I bring*

Ὑμῖν, *to you:* to you *shepherds;* persons of mean condition and simple capacity, leading this innocent and humble sort of life, employed in your honest vocation, undergoing toilsome labour and sore hard-

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ship; witness the open field, witness the cold season, witness the dark night, in which I find you watching and guarding your sheep; to you, who could expect no very welcome tidings; who are little concerned in any great transactions, and can have small ambition or hope of bettering your condition by any changes here; even to you (not in the first place to the mighty *princes*, to the crafty *statesmen*, to the sage *philosophers*, or learned *rabbies*, to the wealthy *merchants*, or fine *citizens*, who now are warm in their houses, enjoying their ease and pleasure; reposing on their beds, or sitting by their fires, or revelling at their banquets and sports; but to you) poor, harmless, silly, industrious souls, who well may represent the greater and better part of mankind; in this surprising and absolutely free way the gracious Lord of heaven by me his special minister doth vouchsafe to send from thence *tidings of great joy:* which shall be

Luke ii. 8. Pauperibus atque vigilantibus, &c. *Bern. de Nat. Serm.* 5.

Παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all people;* or rather to all *the people;* that is, to God's ancient and peculiar people, in regard to which it is said, *I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;* to *that* people, I say, especially, primarily, and more immediately this joy did appertain; it, by a closer relation to God, and special interest in his promises, having plainest title thereto; it, from anticipations of knowledge, faith, and hope, being more capable to admit such an overture; it indeed being the representative of all the spiritual Israel, or faithful seed of Abraham, for whom the benefits which these tidings import were designed; to it first indeed, but mediately and consequentially to all people dispersed on the face of the earth. The expression seemeth adapted

Matt. xv. 24. x. 6. Rom. ix. 4. Luke xxiv. 47. Acts xiii. 46. Isa. ii. 3. Zech. ix. 9. Rom. ix. 4.

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to the present conceits of that nation, which apprehended nothing about God's favourable intentions to the community of men: but in effect it is to be understood extensively in reference to all people: for the Saviour, the Christ, the Lord, of whom this good news did report, was not only to be the Redeemer and Governor of that small people, but of the world, of every nation, of all mankind: here indeed we
Luke ii. 31. have παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all the people;* but in the *nunc dimittis* of old Simeon we have πάντων τῶν λαῶν, *of all*
Luke ii. 30. *the peoples: Mine eyes,* said he, *have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of*
Luke ii. 32. *all the peoples;* As he was *the glory of his people*
i. 68. Acts xiii. *Israel;* as in him *God did visit and redeem that*
47. Isa. xlix. 6. *his people;* so he was *made a light to lighten the*
xlii. 6. Luke ii. 38. *Gentiles, and to be for salvation to the uttermost*
Hag. ii. 7. Psal. ii. 8. *ends of the earth:* he was *the expectation of Is-*
Mic. v. 2. *rael;* but he was likewise *the desire of all nations:* he was destined *to rule in Sion;* but *the heathen* also *were given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession:* he was
Isa. xi. 10. *the root of Jesse, which should stand for an ensign of the people, to which the Gentiles should seek;* he was that royal Person of whom the Psalmist did
Psal. lxxii. 17. sing, *Men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed.*

He was to be born by nation a Jew, but a man by nature; *the Son of man* was a style which he commonly did own and affect, no less than the *Son*
Gal. iv. 4. *of Abraham,* or of *David;* he was *born* indeed *under the law,* but *of a woman;* and therefore bro-
Heb. ii. 14. ther to us all, as *partaker of the same flesh and blood:* hence was he endued with an human compassion, and with a fraternal affection toward all

men; hence was he disposed to extend the benefit of his charitable and gracious performances unto them all. SERM. LXXV.

Judæa therefore must not ingross this angelical gospel; it is of importance most universal and unlimited, reaching through all successions of time, and all extensions of place; filling all ages and all regions of the world with matter and with obligation of joy: hence even by Moses anciently (according to St. Paul's interpretation) were all nations upon this account invited to a common joy; *Rejoice*, said he, *O ye nations with his people.* Hence, in foresight of this event, the holy Psalmist (as the Fathers expound him[c]) did sing, *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of isles be glad thereof:* hence, *Sing, O thou barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child—The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose—Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth*, said the evangelical prophet in regard to this dispensation; in fine, this angel himself did interpret his own words, when in concert with the heavenly choir he sang that anthem, *Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good-will toward men:* whence we may collect that a peace diffused over the earth, and a good-will extended toward all men, were implied in these *tidings of great joy to all people.* Rom. xv. 10. Deut. xxxii. 43. Psal. xcvii. 1. xcvi. 1. Isa. liv. 1. Isa. xxxv. 1. Isa. xlii. 10. Luke ii. 14.

We then are all concerned in these *tidings*, and

[c] Τὴν πρωτέραν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἐπιφάνειαν προλέγει. Theodor.

Totum ad Christum revocemus, si volumus iter rectæ intelligentiæ tenere. *Aug. in Ps.* xcvi. 7.

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we may look on them as by this heavenly evangelist imparted to us; whence our duty must be to listen with reverent attention unto them, seriously to weigh the purport of them, diligently to contemplate the reasons of that great joy, which effectually should be produced in us by them, as their proper and due result; to further which practice, let us take some prospect of this gospel, whereby it may appear pleasant, and apt to kindle a sprightly joy in our hearts. The matter of it is the nativity of our ever blessed Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus; for, *To you*, saith our angel, *is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;* an occurrence fraught with all the greatest causes of joy imaginable; as importing innumerable, unexpressibly and unconceivably vast advantages thence springing to us.

It doth minister occasion of rejoicing for all the blessings which did flow from each of his salutary undertakings and performances; for all the mercies purchased by the merits of his obedience, and by the price of his blood; for all the graces issuing from his dispensation of the Holy Spirit; for all the benefits consequent on his illustrious resurrection, ascension, and glorification; as being a good entrance to them, yea, a great progress in them, and a certain pledge of their full accomplishment: for all the work of our redemption was in a manner achieved, when our Saviour did appear; his incarnation was the great step toward it, as being an act of the humblest obedience, and of the highest merit, that could anywise be performed, for satisfying the justice of God, and winning his favour toward us. His *taking up life* may well seem more meritorious than his *laying it down*, and the chief passion which he could ever undergo;

his death was a passion, great as death could be; his life also was a continual passion, or exercise of huge patience: but his birth seemeth to be the greatest and strangest passion of all; involving the lowest submission and the deepest suffering. What nobler sacrifice could there be, than God's offering himself up to mortality, to infirmity, to slavery? What obedience can be thought of comparable to that which he did express, when he said, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God: I came down, not that I might do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.* For him to descend from heaven, the region of light and bliss, into this gloomy and sad world; for him in a manner to divest himself of celestial majesty, and to assume the form of a servant; for him to be enclosed in a womb, and to come out wailing thence, to suck at a breast for life, to be carried in arms, and laid in a manner, to enter on a stage of being so very low and homely; for him, I say, *the Lord of glory*, thus *to empty* and *abase* himself[d]; may not this reasonably be deemed more than, after his becoming man, to sustain all the grievances incident to our nature and state? Whence *the very assumption of flesh was*, saith St. Athanasius, *the redemption of all mankind*[e]. He was at least thence engaged in the way of acting and suffering whatever was needful for our recovery; and having gone so far, assuredly he never would flinch or re-

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Heb. x. 7. John vi. 38.

Phil. ii. 7, 8.

[d] Ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, ἑαυτὸν ἐταπείνωσεν.

[e] Ἡ προσληψις τῆς σαρκὸς ἐλευθέρωσις ἦν πάσης τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος. Ath. Or. 3. c. Arr. p. 385. vid. p. 618.

Λύχνον ἦλθε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σάρκα, &c. Greg. Naz. Or. 38.

Creatoris ad creaturam descensio credentium est ad æterna provectio. *Leo M. de Nat. Serm.* 5.

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coil, but would go through with all; being come, he would shew himself come to purpose, leaving no part unfinished of his grand design.

So that as they, who celebrate the birth of a prince, do mean thereby to express their joy for all the good, which they do hopefully presume to enjoy from his protection and conduct afterward in all his life; and as they, who welcome the sun-rising, do imply their satisfaction in the conveniences of his light through the whole ensuing day; so may the nativity of our Lord afford matter of rejoicing for all the train of mighty blessings which do succeed it. We may therefore now well consider him born to instruct us by his excellent doctrine, and to guide us by his perfect example; born to merit God's mercy and favour toward us, by an entire submission to God's pleasure in the whole conduct of his life, and in the final resignation of it; born to renew and sanctify our nature, to support and strengthen us in obedience to God's commandments, to succour us in temptations, to comfort us in distresses by his grace; born to rear himself from the grave for confirming our faith, and ensuring our hopes of salvation; born to ascend up above all the heavens to God's right hand, there effectually to intercede for us, thence liberally to dispense all heavenly blessings to us. Well may we now rejoice, as seeing him come to disclose the way of happiness, to establish the covenant of grace, to void all the obstructions, and subdue all the enemies to our welfare: well may we celebrate this birth, as by its virtue blessing the patriarchs, enlightening the prophets, inspiring the martyrs with faith and courage, enduing all the saints, that ever have been, with grace, and crown-

ing them with glory; so that in this day we have the passion, the *pasch*, the ascension, the pentecost, the memorials of every saint suggested to us[f]; the joys of all our festivals do conspire or commence in this; which is the head and spring, which is the fruitful seed, which is the hopeful morning of them all. Πάντα ταῦτα τῆς παρούσης ἡμέρας χάρις ἐστιν· αὕτη γὰρ ἦρξε τῶν ἐφεξῆς ἀγαθῶν. *All these things*, saith St. Gregory Nyssen, *are the grace of this present day, for it began the goods which did in order succeed.* SERM. LXXV. Greg. Nyss. tom. ii. p. 784.

But waving the numberless benefits so consequent on the nativity, we shall only touch some of those which have a more formal and close relation thereto.

I pass over the contemplation of that sweet harmony between the old and the new world; in which, to our comfortable satisfaction, the sweetest attributes of God (his goodness, his wisdom, his fidelity and constancy) do illustrate themselves, by completion of the ancient promises, prefigurations, and predictions touching this event.

I forbear also to reflect on the happy alteration and amendment of the world, which our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the state of things before it with that which followed it; the consideration of which case is very pleasant, and productive of joy. First then,

1. Let us consider, that the nativity doth import the completion of many ancient promises, predictions, and prefigurations concerning it; that where-

[f] Οἰκεῖν καὶ τὰ τοῦ Πάσχα καλὰ τῶν περὶ τὴν γένεσιν εὐφημιῶν μέρος ἐστι. Greg. Nyss.

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as all former dispensations of favour and mercy were as preludes or preambles to this; the old law did aim to represent it in its mysterious pomps; the chief of providential occurrences did intimate it; the prophets often in their mystical raptures did allude to it, and often in clear terms did express it[g]; the gracious designs of God, and the longing expectations of mankind being so variously implied in regard thereto; now all is come to be fulfilled, and perfected in most clear, most effectual, most substantial accomplishment; now is sprung up that *seed of the woman,* which, according to the first gospel preached to Adam, should *bruise the serpent's head;* now is the mystical Isaac, the miraculous *Son of promise,* born; now is that grant to Abraham, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,* made good; now is *Shiloh come,* of whom Jacob foreboded, *unto him the gatherings of the people shall be;* now is that oracle of Moses more than verified, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like to me; him shall ye hear;* now *the Star is come out of Jacob,* the vision whereof dazzled Balaam, and stopped him from cursing that people, in which it should arise; now is that oath discharged to David, *Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne;* now those illustrious predictions of Isaiah, *There shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse—A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son; to us a child is born,*

Gen. iii. 15.
Gen. xxii. 18.
Gal. iii. 8, 16.
Gen. xlix. 10.
Deut. xviii. 15.
Acts iii. 22. vii. 37.
Num. xxiv. 17.
Ps. cxxxii. 11.
Luke i. 33.
Isa. xi. 1. vii. 14. ix. 6. lix. 20.

[g] Sapientia et benignitas Dei ac salutiferi operis mora capaciores nos suæ vocationis effecit, ut quod multis signis, multis vocibus, multisque mysteriis per tot fuerat secula pronunciatum, in his diebus evangelii non esset ambiguum, &c. *Leo P. de Nat. Serm.* 3.

to us a son is given; and the government shall be on his shoulders—There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob, are fully accomplished; now *the righteous Branch,* of which Jeremiah and Zechariah spake, is sprouted forth; and Ezekiel's *One Shepherd,* Daniel's *Son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven;* Micah's *Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old;* Haggai's *Desire of all nations;* Malachi's *Angel of the covenant,* and *Sun of righteousness,* have all in truth appeared: now is that glorious *King* and *Captain* arrived, whom the holy oracles do so magnificently describe; whom Moses and Joshua, whom David and Solomon in so many pat circumstances did foreshadow; whom God would *set upon his holy hill of Sion; the sceptre of whose kingdom is a mighty sceptre;* who should *raise the tabernacle of David that is fallen; before whom all kings should fall down, and whom all nations should serve;* who *should reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of whose kingdom there shall be no end.*

Rom. xi. 26. Jer. xxiii. 5. xxxiii. 15. Zech. iii. 8. vi. 12. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24. Dan. vii. 13. Mic. v. 2. Matt. ii. 6. Hag. ii. 7. Mal. iii. 1. iv. 2. Psal. ii. 6. xlv. 6. lxxii. 11. Acts xv. 16. Am. ix. 11. Luke i. 33. Dan. vii. 13. Mic. iv. 7. Aug. in Ps. xcvi.

Now what can be more delightful, or satisfactory to our mind, than to reflect on this sweet harmony of things, this goodly correspondence between the old and new world; wherein so pregnant evidences of God's chief attributes, (of his goodness, of his wisdom, of his fidelity and constancy,) all conspiring to our benefit, do shine? Is it not pleasant to contemplate how provident God hath ever been for our welfare? what trains from the world's beginning, or ever since our unhappy fall, he hath been laying to repair and restore us? how wisely he hath ordered all dispensations with a convenient reference and

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tendency to this masterpiece of grace[h]? how steady he hath been in prosecuting his designs, and how faithful in accomplishing his promises concerning it?

Joh. viii. 56. If the *holy patriarchs did see this day, and were glad*; if a glimpse thereof did cause their hearts *to leap* within them; if its very dawn had on the spirits of the prophets so vigorous an influence[i], what comfort and complacence should we feel in this its real presence, and bright aspect on us! How sensibly should we be affected with this our happy advantage above them; the which our Lord himself then did teach us to estimate duly, when he said,

Ἠγαλλιάσατο.

Matt. xiii. 16, 17. *Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear: for verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*

Eph. ii. 14. 2. Let us consider what alteration our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the state of things before it to that which followed it. The old world then consisting of two parts, severed by a strong wall of partition, made up of difference in opinion, in practice, in affection, together with a strict pro-

Acts x. 28. hibition to one of holding intercourse with the other.

Of one, and that far the greater part, St. Paul

[h] Non itaque novo consilio Deus rebus humanis, nec sera miseratione consuluit, sed a constitutione mundi unam eandemque omnibus causam salutis instituit. *Leo P. de Nat. Serm.* 3.

[i] Magnam enim jucunditatem tunc carpebant ipsi sancti prophetæ, cum ea videbant in spiritu, non jam impleta, sed adhuc futura. *Aug. in Ps.* xcvi.

hath given us these descriptions and characters: SERM. LXXV.
They were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant, having no hope, Eph. ii. 12.
and being without God in the world; they were
by nature the children of wrath and of disobedience; Eph. ii. 3. ii. 1, 2.
they were *dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience;*
they did *walk in the vanity of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart; and being past feeling, did give themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness;* Eph. iv. 17, 18, 19.
they *had their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind;* Eph. ii. 3.
being *foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.* Tit. iii. 3. Col. iii. 7. (Eph. v. 8. Col. ii. 13. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 2 Cor. iv. 4. 1 Thess. iv. 5. 1 Pet. iv. 3. Gal. iv. 8. Rom. i. 29.)
Such was the case, the dismally wretched case, of the Gentile world; such were our forefathers, (such after them of course, by fatal consequence, should we have been;) they were in their minds blinded with gross ignorance, and deluded with foul errors; they were in their wills and affections corrupted with great disorder, perverseness, sensuality, malice; they did in their conversation practice all sorts of impiety, iniquity, and impurity; their conceptions of God were very unworthy, and their worship answerably such; (full of sottish, savage, beastly superstitions;) their principles were vain, and their life conformably dissolute; in short, they lived under the domination and influence of wicked spirits, who

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thence are styled *lords* and *princes of this world, of this air, of this secular darkness:* even of the wisest among them, (the number of whom, notwithstanding the clatter their writings made, was very small and inconsiderable,) of those who by the conduct of natural light strove to disengage themselves from vulgar mistakes and miscarriages, the case was little better; for even their minds (after all their studious disquisitions and debates) proved dark and giddy; full of ignorance, of error, of doubt in regard to the main points of religion and of morality; some of them flatly denying the existence, or (which in effect is the same) the providence of God; the natural distinction between good and evil, the spiritual nature and future subsistence of our souls, the dispensation of rewards and punishments after this life; others wavering in doubt, or having but faint persuasions about these matters; few or none having clear notions, or steady opinions about any such things; whence their practice, in correspondence to their rules, must needs have been very loose, or very lame; so that well might our apostle say of them, *They became vain in their reasonings, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves wise, they became fools; and as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.*

Eph. vi. 12. ii. 2. (John xii. 31. xiv. 30. xvi. 11. 2 Cor. iv. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 16. Col. i. 13. ii. 15. Acts xxvi. 18.

Διαλογισμοῖς. Rom. i. 21. —28.

As for the other part, or little parcel of men, the condition of that was also very low: if the rest of the world did lie in dark night, they did live but in a dusky twilight; their religion was much wrapt up in shadow and mystery; they had but dilute ideas of God's nature, and scant discoveries of his will;

Col. ii. 17. Heb. viii. 5. x. 1.

their law or rule of practice in divers respects was defective and infirm; they were locked under the discipline of childish rudiments, suiting their raw capacities, and under the bondage of slavish yokes, befitting their stubborn dispositions; which defailances in notion their practice commonly did outstrip; being fond, corrupt, hypocritical, void of interior, substantial, and genuine righteousness; as the old prophets did often complain, and as our Lord, with his apostles, did urge. SERM. LXXV. Rom. viii. 3. Gal. iii. 21. Heb. vii. 18, 19.

Such was the state of the world in its parts; and jointly of the whole it may be said, that it was *shut up under sin* and guilt, under darkness and weakness, under death and corruption, under sorrow and woe: that no full declaration of God's pleasure, no clear overture of mercy, no express grant of spiritual aid, no certain redemption from the filth or the force of sin, from the stroke of death, from due punishment hereafter; no encouragements suitable to high devotion, or strict virtue, were anywise in a solemn way exhibited or dispensed before our Lord's appearance: so that well might all men be then represented as Cimmerians, *sitting in darkness, in the region and shadow of death*; well may we suppose all ages foregoing to have teemed with hope and desire of this happy day; or that, as St. Paul saith, *the whole creation* (that is, all mankind) *groaneth together, and travaileth together until now*; as labouring with pangs of implicit desire, or under a painful sense of needing a Saviour; well might Isaiah thus proclaim his coming; *Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the land, and gross darkness the people:* Gal. iii. 22. Rom. xi. 32. iii. 9, 19. Isa. ix. 1. Matt. iv. 16. Rom. viii. 22. Isa. lx. 1, 2, 3.

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but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising: for, now, *the Lord hath made known his salvation, his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth do see the salvation of our God.*

Ps. xcviii. 2, 3.

Now *we are all children of the light, and of the day;* all *do know God from the least to the greatest;* the rarest, the deepest notions are grown common and obvious; every child is instructed in the highest truths, every peasant is become a great philosopher, (beyond Aristotle, or Plato, or Epictetus,) skilful of the best knowledge, able to direct his life in the best way, capable of obtaining the best good.

1 Thess. v. 5. (2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 6.) Heb. viii. 11. Jer. xxxi. 34.

Now the Spirit of God (the Spirit of direction, of succour, of comfort spiritual) is poured upon all flesh. *Now the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men;* fully instructing them in their duty, and strongly enabling them to perform it, freely offering them mercy, mightily encouraging them with hopes of most blessed rewards.

Acts ii. 17. Joel ii. 28. Tit. ii. 11. Luke xxiv. 47.

Now Jew and Gentile are reunited and compacted in one body; walking in the same light, and under obligation to the same laws; sharing in a common redemption and inheritance; being inseparably linked together with the bands of faith, of charity, of spiritual fraternity; thus *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new,* in virtue and consequence of our Lord's appearance: in contemplation of which so great, so general, so happy a change, how can we forbear to rejoice?

Eph. iii. 6. ii. 15. 2 Cor. v. 17. Διάφθωσις. Heb. ix. 10.

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But further, that we may yet more nearly touch the point,

3. Let us consider that the nativity of our Lord is a grand instance, a pregnant evidence, a rich earnest of Almighty God's very great affection and benignity toward mankind: for, *In this*, saith St. John, *the love of God was manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world:* and, *Through the tender mercies of our God*, sang old Zechariah, *the dayspring from on high did visit us:* this indeed is the peculiar experiment, wherein that most divine attribute did shew and signalize itself. The power of God doth brightly shine in the creation, the wisdom of God may clearly be discerned in the government of things: but the incarnation of God is that work, is that dispensation of grace, wherein the divine goodness doth most conspicuously display itself. How indeed possibly could God have demonstrated a greater excess of kindness toward us, than by thus, for our sake and good, sending his dearest Son out of his bosom into this sordid and servile state, subjecting him to all the infirmities of our frail nature, exposing him to the worst inconveniences of our low condition [k]? What expressions can signify, what comparisons can set out the stupendous vastness of this kindness? If we should

1 John iv. 9. John iii. 16, 17. Eph. ii. 4. Luke i. 78.

Ps. xxxvi. 6. cviii. 4.

[k] Apparuerat ante potentia in rerum creatione, apparebat sapientia in earum gubernatione; sed benignitas misericordiæ nunc maxime apparuit in humanitate. *Bern. de Nat. Serm.* 1.

Semper quidem diversis modis, multisque mensuris humano generi bonitas divina consuluit, et plurima providentiæ suæ munera omnibus retro seculis clementer impertiit; sed in novissimis temporibus omnem abundantiam solitæ benignitatis excessit; quando in Christo ipsa ad peccatores misericordia, ipsa ad errantes veritas, ipsa ad mortuos vita descendit, &c. *P. Leo M. de Nat. Serm.* 4.

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imagine, that a great prince should put his only son (a son most lovely, and worthily most beloved) into rags, should dismiss him from his court, should yield him up into the hardest slavery, merely to the intent that he thereby might redeem from captivity the meanest and basest of his subjects, how faint a resemblance would be of that immense goodness, of that incomparable mercy, which in this instance the King of all the world hath declared toward us his poor vassals, his indeed unworthy rebels!

And what greater reason of joy can there be, than such an assurance of his love, on whose love all our good dependeth, in whose love all our felicity consisteth? What can be more delightful than to view the face of our Almighty Lord so graciously smiling upon us?

Should we not be extremely glad, should we not be proud, if our earthly prince by any signal mark would express himself kindly affected to us? How much more should we resent such a testimony of God's favour! how worthily may our souls be transported with a sense of such affection!

4. We may consider our Lord's nativity, as not only expressing simple good-will, but implying a perfect reconciliation, a firm peace, a steady friendship established between God and us; or that it did not only proceed from love, but did also produce love to us. We did stand at a great distance, in estrangement, yea in enmity toward God; our first parents had by presumptuous disobedience revolted from him; and we, insisting on the footsteps of their apostasy, continued in defiance of him; *All men had sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God—There was not a righteous man upon earth,*

Rom. iii. 23. ix. 23. Gal. iii. 22. Eccles. vii. 20. Leo de Nat. Serm. 2.

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that did good, and sinned not: whence unavoidably the wrath of the most holy God was incensed, the justice of the most righteous Lord was engaged against us; thence did issue a sad doom, thence a just sentence of capital punishment was denounced on us; no pretence of favour, no overture of peace, no hope of redress did then appear; we nowise being able to expunge our guilt, to repair our offences, to recover out of that corruption in mind and will, which did seal us up to ruin, indisposing us either to find or to entertain mercy: but our Lord's coming did appease that anger, did mollify that justice, did suspend that condemnation, did close the breach, and ***slay the enmity;*** ***God,*** as the apostle speaketh, ***sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, did condemn sin in the flesh***[l]: for, how can God now avert his face from us, whom his only dear Son hath vouchsafed to make and own for his brethren? How can he look with an eye of displeasure on that nature, wherewith that Son of his love standeth clothed before him? How can he abide offended with our race, in which pure innocence and perfect obedience are found[m]; he now appearing with us, and for us, in whom not the strictest justice nor the

Eph. ii. 15, 16. Rom. viii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 19.

(1 Pet. i. 19. Heb. vii. 26.) John xiv. 30. —ἐν ἐμοὶ οὐκ ἔχει οὐδέν. John xix. 6. —οὐχ εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ καταδίκην θανάτου γινομένην, ἑαυτὴν ἀνακαλέσασθαι εἰς ἐλευθερίαν. Ath. p. 638.

[l] Ἀδύνατον γέγονε τῇ φύσει λογικῇ οὔσῃ, καὶ ἑκουσίως ἁμαρτησάσῃ, καὶ

Ἀδύνατον ἑτέρως τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ ἀναμάρτητον ἐπ' ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως παραδεχθῆναι, εἰ μὴ θεὸς ἐν σαρκὶ πιστεύοιτο εἶναι, ὁ τὴν ἀναμάρτητον δικαιοσύνην εἰς κόσμον εἰσαγαγών, &c. Ath. de Incarn. Verbi.

[m] Τὸ τοῦ Ἀδὰμ σύμπτωμα εἰς ἀσύγκριτον ἀνάστημα Χριστὸς ἀνεστήσατο, ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας ὀφθεὶς, καὶ κατακρίνας τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί. Ath. p. 620.

Εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτησάσῃ φύσει ἡ ἀναμαρτησία ὤφθη, πῶς κατεκρίθη ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῇ σαρκί; Id. p. 368.

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shrewdest malice can descry any fault or blemish; *in whom* therefore *God is* thoroughly *well pleased?* Since we have *Emmanuel, God with us—God manifested in our flesh—The Lord our righteousness,* partaker of our infirmity, intercessor and advocate for his own flesh and blood, ready to do and suffer whatever God pleaseth to require on our behalf, how can God be against us? Shall God and man persist at distance or disaffection, who are so closely related, who are indeed so intimately united in one person? Shall heaven and earth retain enmity, which have so kindly embraced and kissed each other; since *truth hath sprouted from the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven?* Shall the war go on, when the great Mediator and Umpire of peace is come; *preaching peace to them that are afar off, and to them that are near?* Can death any longer reign over us, or our disgrace and misery continue, now that *the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, the Captain of salvation* doth appear for our relief?

κω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.
Matt. iii. 17.
1 Tim. iii. 16.
Jer. xxiii. 6. xxxiii. 16.
Psal. lxxxv. 11.
Isa. ix. 6.
Acts x. 36.
Eph. ii. 17.
1 Cor. ii. 8.

Now then what can be more worthy of joy, than such a blessed turn of affairs? How can we otherwise than with exceeding gladness solemnize such a peace? a peace accorded with him, who in forces so infinitely doth overmatch us; who at his pleasure can utterly quell us; who with the greatest ease, with less than a word of his mouth, can dash us to nothing, or hurl us down into an abyss of remediless woe: how can we avoid being extremely satisfied at the recovery of his favour and friendship, which alone can be the foundation of our safety and welfare, which is the sole fountain of all good, of all comfort, of all felicity?

5. Our Lord's nativity doth infer a great honour,

and a high preferment to us: nowise indeed could mankind be so dignified, or our nature so advanced as hereby: no wisdom can devise a way beyond this, whereby God should honour his most special favourites, or promote them to a nearness unto himself. For hence we become allied to God in a most strait affinity, his eternal Son being made our brother: hence as touching the blood-royal of heaven we do in dignity o'ertop all the creation; so that what the Psalmist uttered concerning man is verified in the most comprehensive sense; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet:* for now the Son of man, being also the son of God, is *the head of all principality and power*, is *the Lord of all things*, is the sovereign prince of all the world, is placed *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.* This is a peculiar honour, to which the highest angels cannot pretend; for *he took not the nature of angels, but he took the seed of Abraham;* whence those noble creatures are become in a manner inferior to poor us; and, according to just obligation, willingly do adore our nature; for, *when God brought his firstbegotten Son into the world, he said, Let all the angels of God worship him.* Is not indeed our flesh become adorable, as the true Shechinah, as the everlasting palace of the supreme Majesty, *wherein the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily;* as the most holy shrine of the Divinity; as the orb of *inaccessible light;* as more than all this, if more could be expressed, or if we could expound that text, *the*

SERM. LXXV.

Eph. iii. 10, 19.

(Ἡνωμένος κατὰ πνεῦμα, ἡμῖν δὲ κατὰ σάρκα. Ath. p. 612.)

Psal. viii. 5, 6. Heb. ii. 7, 8.

Col. ii. 10. Eph. ii. 22. Acts x. 36. Eph. i. 21. Phil. ii. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

Heb. ii. 16.

Heb. i. 6. Ἡ σὰρξ ἐθεολογήθη. Ath. p. 597. Col. ii. 9. Totum corpus implet tota divinitas. *Leo de Nat. Serm.* 10.

John i. 14. iii. 34.

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Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us? May not our soul worthily claim highest respect, all whose faculties (being endued with unmeasurable participations of the Holy Spirit) have been tuned to a perfect harmony with the all-wise understanding and the most pure will of God? yea, which hath been admitted into the nearest consortship, into the strictest union with the eternal Word; hath become an ingredient of him, who is *the wisdom and the power of God?* It was a great dignity that man should be made according to the image of God; but it is a more sublime glory, that God should be made after the image of man, κατὰ πάντα ὁμοιωθεὶς, *being made like to us in all things*, bating only sin, which is no part of us, but an unnatural excrescence, or a deflection from our nature[n]: how could we be so raised up to God, as by his thus stooping down to us? What can be imagined more honourable to us, than that God should deem us worthy of such condescension? This, this indeed is our exaltation, that God for us should express not only so vast charity, but so prodigious humility.

1 Cor. i. 24.

Heb. ii. 17.

And is it not good matter of joy to be thus highly graced[o]? When are men better pleased than when they are preferred; than especially, when from the meanest state, *from the dunghill*, or *from the dust*, they *are raised to be set among princes*, and *made*

Psal. cxiii. 7, 8.

1 Sam. ii. 8.

[n] Qui cum origini humanæ multum dederit, quod nos ad imaginem suam fecit, reparationi nostræ longe amplius tribuit, cum servili formæ ipse se Dominus coaptavit. *Leo de Nat. Serm.* 4.

[o] Exultent ergo in laudem Dei corda credentium, et mirabilia ejus confiteantur filii hominum, quoniam in hoc præcipue Dei opere humilitas nostra cognoscit, quanti eam suus conditor æstimârit. *Leo. Serm.* 4.

to inherit the throne of glory? Wherefore this being our case, that we sons of earth, *children of corruption*, and *brethren of worms*, (in Job's style;) we exiles of paradise, we heirs of death and misery; we, that by our nature are the lowest of all intelligent creatures, that by our merits were debased *beneath the beasts that perish*, that we are assumed to such relations, that we are ennobled to such a pitch, that our nature hath mounted so high above all creatures, with what enlargement of heart should we entertain a dispensation so wonderful! how welcome should that day be which doth introduce it[p]! SERM. LXXV. Job xvii. 14. Psal. xlix. 12.

6. Finally, if we survey all principal causes of joy and special exultation, we shall find them all concurring in this event.

Is a messenger of good news embraced with joy? Behold the great Evangelist is come, with his mouth full of news, most admirable, most acceptable: he, who doth acquaint us, that God is well pleased, that man is restored, that *the adversary is cast down*, that paradise is set open, and immortality retrieved; that truth and righteousness, peace and joy, salvation and happiness are descended, and come to dwell on earth; he of whom the prophet told, *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth;* he who doth himself thus declare the drift and purport of his message; *The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, to preach good tidings unto the meek;* Rev. xii. 10. John xiv. 30. Luke x. 18. Isa. lii. 7. Nah. i. 15. Rom. x. 15. Isa. lxi. 1, 2. Luke iv. 18, 19.

[p] Hic infirmitatis nostræ suscipiens conditionem, propter quos ad inferna descendit, eosdem in cœlestibus collocavit. *Leo de Nat.* 5.

SERM. LXXV.

he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord; to comfort all that mourn.

Is the birth of a prince by honest subjects to be commemorated with joyous festivity? Behold a Prince born to all the world! a Prince undertaking to rule mankind with sweetest clemency and exact justice; a Prince bringing with him all peace and prosperity; *in whose days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely;* who shall protect us in assured rest and safety; shall secure us from all danger and mischief; shall achieve most gallant and glorious exploits in our behalf; shall vanquish all the enemies of our welfare; shall rescue us from the worst slaveries and mischiefs; shall settle us in a most free and happy state: he *who bringeth salvation from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us;* that, *being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.* Now therefore it is seasonable to cry out, *Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.*

Isa. xi. 2. Psal. xlv. & lxxii.

Jer. xxiii. 6.

Luke i. 71, 74, 75.

Rev. xix. 6, 7. xi. 15.

Isa. ix. 3. Rev. vi. 2. Luke xi. 22. Col. ii. 15. (John vi. 33.)

May victory worthily beget exultation? See the invincible Warrior doth issue forth into the field, *conquering and to conquer:* he that shall baffle and rifle *the strong one,* our formidable adversary; that shall rout all the forces of hell, and *triumph over* the powers of darkness; that utterly shall defeat sin, and slay death itself; that shall subdue the world, and lay all things prostrate at his feet; behold the

Captain of our salvation, arrayed with glorious humility, and armed with a mighty patience; see, the great blow is struck, at which the infernal powers do stagger; the Devil's pride and envy are abased, all the enemies are amazed, are daunted, are confounded at his presence; they cannot stand, they break, they scatter, they flee before him. SERM. LXXV. 1 John iii. 8. Rom. xvi. 20.

Is a proclamation of peace, after rueful wars, to be solemnized with alacrity? Behold then everlasting peace between heaven and earth, a general peace among men, a sound peace between each good man and himself are settled and published; the illustrious herald, the noble hostage of them is arrived; *the Prince of peace* himself doth bring all peace unto us. Eph. ii. 17. (Isa. lvii. 2.) Acts x. 36. Isa. ix. 6.

Is satisfaction of desire and hope very pleasant? Behold the *desire of all nations, the expectation of Israel*, he for whom the whole creation groaned, is come.

Is recovery of liberty delectable to poor slaves and captives? Behold the *Redeemer is come out of Sion*; the precious ransom, sufficient to purchase the freedom of many worlds, is laid down; unblemished innocence, purity, and perfection appearing in human nature, have procured a releasement for us; have unlocked the prison of sin detaining us, have knocked off the shackles of guilt sorely pinching and galling our consciences; have wrested us from the hands of those proud masters, who claimed a right, who exercised a most tyrannous power over us[q]; he (Gal. iii. 22.)

[q] Nam superbia hostis antiqui non immerito sibi in omnes homines jus tyrannicum vindicabat; nec indebito dominatu premebat, quos a mandato Dei spontaneos in obsequium suæ voluntatis allexerat. *Leo de Nat. Serm.* 2.

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is come, that *proclaimeth liberty to the captives, and opening of the prison to them that are bound;*

Isa. lxi. 1. Luke iv. 18. Isa. xxxv. 10.

the time is come, of which the prophet foretold, *The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Sion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

Luke x. 33. Matt. ix. 12.

Is an overture of health acceptable to sick and languishing persons? Behold the great Physician, endued with admirable skill, and furnished with in-

1 Pet. ii. 24.

fallible remedies, is come, to cure us of our maladies, and ease us of our pains; to bind up our wounds, and to pour in balm (the most sovereign balm of his own blood) into them; to free us, not only from all mortiferous diseases, but from mortality itself: he,

Isa. lxi. 1. Luke iv. 18. Isa. liii. 4. Matt. viii. 17.

who was *sent to bind up and heal the broken-hearted;* he, who *himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses;* he, of whom the prophet (in relation to corporal, and much more to spiritual in-

Isa. xxxv. 4, 5, 6. Matt. xi. 5. Luke v. 17. (John xii. 40. Acts x. 38. Luke x. 34.)

firmities) did foretell;—*God will come and save you; then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing;* he, whose art no disease can resist, who is able to cure our most desperate, our most inveterate distempers; to heal the corruption and impotency of our nature, to void the ignorances and errors of our understanding, to correct the stupidity of our hearts, the perverseness of our wills, the disorder of our affections, to mitigate our

(Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Eph. ii. 10.)

anguish of conscience, and cleanse our sores of guilt; by various efficacious medicines, by the wholesome instructions of his doctrine, by the powerful inspirations of his grace, by the refreshing comforts of his

Spirit, by the salutary virtue of his merits and suf- SERM. LXXV.
ferings.

Is mirth seasonable on the day of marriage? Behold the greatest wedding that ever was is this day solemnized; heaven and earth are contracted; divinity is espoused to humanity; a sacred, an indissoluble knot is tied between God and man; *The Bridegroom is come forth out of his chamber,* (*Verbum Dei de utero virginali,*) clad in his nuptial garment of flesh, and ready to wed the church, his beloved spouse[r]; *Let us therefore be glad and rejoice; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* Joel ii. 16. Rev. xix. 7.

Is the access of a good friend to be received with cheerful gratulation? Behold the dearest and best Friend of all mankind (most able, most willing, most ready to perform all good offices, to impart wholesome advice, needful aid, sweet converse, and seasonable consolation) is arrived to visit us, to sojourn with us, to dwell in us for ever.

Is opportune relief grateful to persons in a forlorn condition, pinched with extreme want, or plunged in any hard distress? Behold a merciful, a bountiful, a mighty Saviour and succourer, undertaking *to comfort all that mourn,* inviting all such to receive from him a plentiful supply for their needs, a comfortable ease in their pressures, a happy riddance from their calamities; who *crieth* aloud, *If any one thirsteth, let him come to me and drink; Come to* Ἐκκαξι. John vii. 37. Isa. lv. 1. xliv. 3. Matt. xi. 28.

[r] In natali Domini quasi in nuptiis spiritualibus sponsæ suæ ecclesiæ Christus adjunctus est—tunc processit sponsus de thalamo suo, hoc est, Verbum Dei de utero virginali. *Aug. de temp. Serm.* 2.

Ἡ ταστὰς ἐν ᾗ ὁ λόγος ἐνυμφεύσατο τὴν σάρκα. Procl. in Eph. p. 1.

SERM. LXXV. *me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Is the sun-rising comfortable, after a tedious, darksome, and cold night? See, *the Sun of righteousness is risen with healing in his wings*, dispensing all about his pleasant rays and kindly influences: *The dayspring from on high hath visited us*; diffusing an universal light upon the souls of men, whereby the night of ignorance is dispelled, the spectres of error are vanished, the mists of doubt are scattered; whereby we clearly and assuredly discern all truths of importance to us, and worthy of our knowledge; concerning the nature and attributes, the works and providence, the will and pleasure of God; concerning ourselves, our nature and original, our duty and interest, our future state, and final doom: *Our light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon us; the light of the world, the true light, enlightening every man*, by whose lustre *all flesh may see the salvation of God*, and *which guideth our feet in the way of peace*, doth visibly shine forth upon us.

Mal. iv. 2. Luke i. 78. Isa. lx. 1. John viii. 12. ix. 5. i. 9. Luke iii. 6. i. 79.

Never indeed did heaven with so fair and serene a countenance smile upon earth, as then it did, when this (ἀστὴρ λαμπρὸς καὶ ὀρθρινὸς) *bright and morning star* did spring up above our horizon, bringing this goodly day; and with it shedding life and cheer among us.

Rev. xxii. 16.

From this auspicious day did commence the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were expelled from paradise, adjudged to death, and committed to hell; from thence we became reinstated in a condition of hope, and in a fair capacity of happiness; from thence is to be dated a return of joy

into this region of disconsolateness. In this nativity mankind was born, or did revive from manifold deaths; from a legal, a moral, a natural, an eternal death; from lying dead in irreparable guilt, and under an insuperable power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed into that *second* more ghastly *death* of perpetual incurable anguish. SERM. LXXV.

[s] It is in effect therefore the birthday of the world; the beginning of a new, better, eternal life to men, (offered to all, and effectually bestowed on those who will embrace it,) which we now do celebrate. All reason therefore we have to rejoice most heartily and most abundantly: as the goods thence accruing to us are in multitude innumerable, in quality inestimable, in duration immense; so in some correspondence should our joy be very intense, very effuse, very stable; the contemplation of them should infuse somewhat of that *unspeakable joy*, whereof St. Peter speaketh; we should *be filled*, according to St. Paul's expression, *with all joy and peace in believing* them; we should *hold fast*, as the apostle to the Hebrews adviseth, *the confidence and rejoicing of hope*, grounded on them, *firm to the end.*

χαρᾷ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ. 1 Pet. i. 8. Rom. xv. 13. Phil. i. 25. Heb. iii. 6. Rom. xii. 12.

Having so many, so great causes of joy, are we not very stupid, are we not strangely cross and perverse, if we neglect so pleasant a duty?

To conclude: Of all the days that rise upon us,

[s] It is the birthday of the church. Generatio enim Christi origo est populi Christiani, et natalis capitis natalis est corporis. *P. Leo de Nat. Serm.* 6.

Sicut cum Christo in passione crucifixi, in resurrectione resuscitati, in ascensione ad dextram Patris collocati, ita cum ipso sumus in hac nativitate congeniti. *Ibid.*

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this undoubtedly is the queen, crowned by God's own hand with sovereign blessings; God hath avowed it to be the day of his peculiar making, and therefore of our special rejoicing; for thus of old the inspired Psalmist did teach and exhort us to keep Christmas: *This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.*

Psal. cxviii. 24. Matt. xxi. 9. 42. 1 Pet. ii. 7. Acts iv. 11.

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THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST FORETOLD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Acts iii. 18.

But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

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MANY good arguments there are, different in kind, which conspire to persuade the truth of our religion; such as are the intrinsic reasonableness, excellency, and perfection of its doctrine; the miraculous works performed in attestation thereto; the special favour of Providence declared in the support and propagation thereof: but upon no other ground do the scriptures so much build its truth, and our obligation to embrace it, as upon the exact correspondence and conformity thereof to all the ancient scriptures, which did foreshew or foretell its revelation and introduction into the world; to those especially which described the personal characters, circumstances, and performances of our Lord: to this our Lord, in his discourses and disputes with incredulous people, referred them; *Search the scriptures*, said he, *because in them ye expect to have eternal life*; (that is, to find the true way of saving truth leading thereto;) *and those are they which*

John v. 39.

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testify of me: by this he instructed and convinced his disciples; *beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself:* and, *These* (said he to them presently before his departure) *are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me:* this the apostles, in all their preaching, (whereby they taught, proved, and persuaded the Christian doctrine,) did chiefly insist upon; *Moses,* saith St. Peter, *truly said unto the fathers, yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days;* and, *To him,* saith he again, *give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* And of St. Paul it is said, that *he mightily convinced the Jews—shewing by the scriptures, that Jesus was the Christ;* and—*he expounded, and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets:* thus the chief apostles and founders of our religion in their public discourses; and in their Epistles they observe the same method; as particularly asserting Christian doctrines and duties by the testimonies of prophetical scriptures, so generally affirming our religion to be chiefly grounded on them; *of which salvation* (saith St. Peter, concerning the salvation exhibited by the gospel) *the prophets did inquire, and search diligently, who prophesied of the grace to come unto you;* and (in regard to the conviction of

Luke xxiv. 27. xxii. 37. i. 70.

Luke xxiv. 44.

Acts iii. 22, 24.

Acts x. 43. xlii. 27. xv. 15. xxiv. 14. John i. 45. Acts xviii. 28. xxviii. 23.

1 Pet. i. 10.

others) he seems to prefer the attestation of this kind before the special revelation immediately made to the apostles; for having spoken of it, he subjoins, καὶ ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον· *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye do take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.* And St. Paul saith, that *the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, was then made manifest, and by the prophetical scriptures, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations, to the obedience of faith;* and, *The holy writings,* he telleth Timothy, *were able to make* him *wise to* the *salvation* which is *by the faith of Jesus Christ;* that is, they were able to shew and persuade to him the truth of Christianity, which promiseth salvation to all that heartily embrace it and observe its laws.

2 Pet. i. 19.

Rom. xvi. 25, 26. i. 2.

2 Tim. iii. 15.

Such a stress was laid upon this probation by the founders of our religion; and no wonder; for that it is not only extremely forcible in itself, but hath some particular uses, and some peculiar advantages beyond others. The foreknowledge of future contingent events, (such as were many of those concerning our Saviour, depending upon the freest acts of human will,) as it is for the manner of attaining it most incomprehensible to us, so it is most proper to God, and by all men so acknowledged; future contingencies being secrets which no man, no angel, no creature can dive into, they being not discernible in their causes, which are indeterminate; nor in themselves, who are finite. The prediction therefore of such events could not otherwise than proceed from

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his pleasure; neither could he yield it in way of favour and approbation to that which was not perfectly true and good: this way therefore doth absolutely confirm the truth and goodness of Christian doctrine; it withal manifests the great worth and weight thereof, as implying the particular regard and care God had of it, designing it so anciently, laying trains of providence toward it, and preparing such evidences for the confirmation thereof; it together into the bargain maintaineth the truth of the Jewish dispensation, the sincerity of the ancient patriarchs and prophets, and the vigilant care the divine goodness hath always had over the state of religion, and toward the welfare of mankind; never leaving it destitute of some immediate revelations from himself. It had a peculiar aptitude to convert the Jews, who were possessed with a full persuasion concerning the veracity and sanctity of their ancient prophets; and could not therefore doubt concerning the truth of that, which appeared conformable to that which they had foretold should be declared and dispensed for their benefit. This probation also hath this advantage, that it singly taken doth suffice to convince; whereas others can hardly do it otherwise than in conjunction with one another, and especially with its aid: for the goodness of the doctrine may be contested in some points; and however good it seem, it may be imputed to human invention: strange effects may be deemed producible by other causes beside divine power; and they may be suffered to be done for other ends than for confirmation of truth; they are also commonly transient, and thence most liable to doubt. Providence also is in many cases so mysterious and unsearchable, that the

incredulous will never allow any inferences to be drawn from it: but the plain correspondence of events to the standing records of ancient prophecies (obvious and conspicuous to every one that will consult and compare them) concerning a person to be sent by God, who should have such circumstances, and be so qualified, who should in God's name preach such doctrines and perform such works, is a proof, which alone may assure any man, that such a person doth come from God, and is in what he declareth or doeth approved by him: no counterfeiting can here find place; no evasion can be devised from the force of this proof. SERM. LXXVI.

This way therefore of discourse our Lord and his apostles (whose business it was by the most proper and effectual methods to subdue the reasons of men to the *obedience of faith* and entertainment of Christian truth) did especially use; as generally in respect to all things concerning our Lord, so particularly in regard to his passion; declaring it to happen punctually according to what had been foreseen by God, and thence foreshewed by his prophets, rightly understood; *He took the twelve*, saith St. Luke of our Lord, *and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished: for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they shall scourge him, and put him to death.* And again, after his resurrection, he thus reproves his disciples; *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?* They Luke xviii. 31, 32, 33. Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 46.

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did not then (partly being blinded with prejudice, partly not having used due industry, and perhaps not excelling in natural capacity, however, not yet being sufficiently enlightened by divine grace) apprehend, or discern, that, according to the prophetical instructions, our Lord was so to suffer; but afterward, when he had *opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,* they did see, and specially urge this point: then St. Peter declared, that *the Spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow;* then it was their manner to *reason* (as is said of St. Paul) *out of the scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered: saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer; delivering first of all, that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures:* this is that which in my text St. Peter doth insist upon, affirming about the passion of Christ, that it not only had been predicted by one, or more, but foreshewed by an universal consent of all the prophets; to illustrate and confirm which assertion of his, is the scope of our present Discourse: to perform which, after having briefly touched the state of the matter in hand, we shall apply ourselves.

Luke xxiv. 45.

1 Pet. i. 11.

Acts xvii. 2, 3. xxvi. 22, 23.

1 Cor. xv. 3.

That the Messias was to come in an humble and homely manner; (without appearance of worldly splendour or grandeur;) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness; that he was to cause offences, and find oppositions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be hated and scorned, to be

disgracefully and harshly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted; yea, that at last he was to be prosecuted, condemned, and executed as a malefactor, is a truth indeed, which the Jews (although they firmly believed and earnestly expected the coming of a Messias) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits; yea, inconsistent with the nature and drift of their religion, as they did understand it; for their religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity, and prosperity, as things most highly valuable; did propound them as very proper, if not as the sole rewards of piety and obedience; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard: they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction, and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell: they particularly are said to have conceited, that to be rich was a needful qualification for a prophet; (no less needful, than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good conversation and life:) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem, the Spirit of God doth not rest upon a poor man;* (that is, no special communications of grace, or of wisdom and goodness, are by God ever afforded to persons of a low and afflicted condition;) being a maxim which they had framed, and which currently passed among them: that he therefore, who was designed to be so notable a prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore should be so highly SERM. LXXVI.

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favoured by God, that he should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd; that could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had further (in congruity to these prejudices, abetted by that extreme self-love and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the Messias was to come in a great visible state and power; to achieve deeds of mighty prowess and renown; to bring the nations of the world into subjection under him; and so to reign among them in huge majesty and prosperity. When Jesus therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications, and performances, to the prophetical characters of the Messias) did first appear such as he did, with some pretences, or intimations rather, that he was the Messias, their stomach presently rose at it; they were exceedingly scandalized at him; they deemed him not only *a madman* (one possessed or distracted) and *an impostor*, but *a blasphemer;* for no less than blasphemy they took it to be for so mean and pitiful a wretch (as to their eyes he seemed) to assume unto himself so high a dignity, and so near a relation unto God, as being the Messias did import. We even see the disciples themselves of our Lord so deeply imbued with this national prejudice, that, even after they had avowed him for the Christ, they could scarce with patience hear him foretelling what grievous things should befall him: St. Peter himself, upon that occasion, even just after he seriously had confessed him to be the Christ, *did,* as it is expressed, *take him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord:* yea, presently after that

Matt. xvi. 20.

Matt. xiii. 57. xxvi. 65.

Matt. xvi. 22. xvii. 2. John xvi. 12.

our Lord most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of a kingdom, and of being grandees therein: yea, further, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them; for even then they demanded of him, whether he would *at that time restore the kingdom unto Israel;* meaning such an external visible kingdom. SERM. LXXVI. Matt. xx. 21, 25. Acts i. 6.

Hence of all things, notifying the Messias, this seemeth to be the only particular, which in general the Jews did not, or would not, see and acknowledge; and this caused them to oversee all other glorious marks, how clearly soever shining in and about the person of Jesus: this cloud hindered them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being duly affected with the wonderfulness of his works, from minding, or from crediting all the testimonies from heaven ministered unto him; this, as St. Paul telleth us, was the main *scandal,* which obstructed their embracing the gospel. As it was their ignorance or error in this point, which disposed them to persecute our Lord; (*nisi enim ignoratus nihil pati posset,* as Tertullian saith; *if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory,* saith St. Paul;) so it was that which maintained their obstinate hatred of his name and memory; although graced with so illustrious testimonies of divine power and providence. 1 Cor. i. 23. Acts xiii. 27. iii. 17. John xv. 21. Tert. in Marc. iii. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 8.

We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars concerning our Lord, allege the general consent of God's people in expounding the prophets according to our sense, this being one of those points, in respect to which the prophets themselves did foresee

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and foretell their perverse stupidity and incredulity; that *they should look, and not see; hear, and not understand*; yielding herein special occasion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* Yet notwithstanding their affected and culpable blindness, there is no particular concerning the Messias in the ancient scriptures, either more frequently in way of mystical insinuation and adumbration glanced at, or more clearly in direct and plain language expressed; or which also by reasonable deduction thence may be more strongly inferred than this.

Vid. Tert. ibid. Isa. vi. 9. Matt. xiii. 13. Ezek. xii. 2. Acts xxviii. 26. Isa. liii. 1.

1. I say, first, it is frequently glanced at by mystical insinuations; for explaining the intent of which assertion, we shall premise somewhat, which may serve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the ancient scripture in the New Testament; the which, together with others connected with them, or bearing just analogy to them, we also, being assured of their design by the authority of our Lord and his apostles, may safely presume after them to apply to the same purposes.

We may then consider, that the all-wise God, (who *worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*, and *to whom all things are present*,) having *before eternal times*, as St. Paul speaketh, determined in due time to send the Messias, for accomplishing the greatest design that ever was to be managed in this world, (that which should bring the highest glory to himself, and procure the richest benefits to the principal of his creatures here,) did by his incomprehensible providence so order things, that all the special dispensations preceding it should have a fit tendency and an advantageous reference thereto; so that, when it came upon the stage, it

Eph. i. 11. 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. i. 2. 1 Cor. ii. 7. Eph. i. 3. iii. 9. Rom. xvi. 25. Col. i. 26.

might appear that the main of the plot consisted therein; and that whatever was acted before had principally a respect thereto. As therefore from the beginning of things God did in a gradual method make real preparations towards it, by several steps imparting discoveries of his mind about it, or in order thereto, (somewhat to Adam himself, more to Abraham and the patriarchs, somewhat further to Moses, much more yet to divers of the prophets among his chosen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered divers kinds of instruction conformable to it, and conducible to the promoting and entertainment thereof,) so he did also take especial care by many apposite representations, (νοητὰ θεωρήματα, *intelligible spectacles*, or objects of mental speculation, Eusebius calleth them,) handsomely inserted into all his dispensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his meaning about it; that so it might at length shew itself with more solemnity, and less surprise: the most eminent persons therefore, whom he raised up, and employed in his affairs, tending to that end, as they did resemble the Messias, in being instruments of God's particular grace and providence, (being indeed inferior Christs and Mediators, partial Saviours and Redeemers of his people, as they are sometimes called;) so they were ordered in several circumstances of their persons, in divers actions they performed, in the principal accidents befalling them, to represent him: (becoming εἰκονικοὶ Χριστοὶ, *Christs in image*, as Eusebius again styleth them:) the rites also and services of religion instituted by them in God's name were adapted to the same purpose; they and all things about them,

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Euseb. Hist. i. 3.

Ps. cv. 15. Isa. xlv. 1. Heb. viii. 6. Gal. iii. 19. Neh. ix. 27. Acts vii. 35.

Euseb. Hist. i. 14.

Heb. viii. 5. Exod. xxv. 40.

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by God's especial direction and wise care, being fitted so as to be congruous emblems and shadows prefiguring Christ, and whatever appertained to him: thus was Adam, as St. Paul calleth him, *a type of Christ;* and Abel, Melchisedec, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Zorobabel are intimated to have been such; the most signal things done by them, or befalling them, having been suited to answer somewhat remarkable concerning him; so that we may say of them all, as the apostle to the Hebrews did of the Jewish priests, *they served to the subindication and shadowing of heavenly things.* In David particularly this relation is so plain, that because thereof, in the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea, the Messias is called by his name, as if he were revived in the Messias. It indeed well suited the dignity of this great personage, and the importance of his business, that he should have appointed so notable heralds and harbingers to *go before his face;* furnished with conspicuous ensigns and badges denoting their relation to him. It was proper, that God should appear to have had always an express regard toward him: it consequently doth serve to our edification; for that we duly comparing things, and espying this admirable correspondency, may be instructed thereby, and established in our faith; may be excited to the admiration of God's wisdom, so harmoniously connecting things, and of his goodness, so provident for our welfare; may also be induced thereby the more highly to adore the Messias, and to esteem his design: such uses St. Paul signifieth, when, having compared divers things concerning Moses to things concerning Christ, he saith,

Rom. v. 14. Vid. Euseb. ibid.

Heb. viii. 5. Οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσι τῶν ἐπουρανίων.

Jer. xxx. 9. Hos. iii. 5. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. xxxvii. 24, 25. (Heb. viii. 5. x. 1. ix. 23. Gal. iv. 24. Col. ii. 17.)

All these things happened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come. 1 Cor. x. 11, 6. SERM. LXXVI.

It is also (both for illustration and proof of these things) to be observed, that because those eminent servants of God were representatives of Christ, many things are spoken of them, as such; many things are ascribed to them, which only, or chiefly, were intended of him; their names are used as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it seemed to divine wisdom not so convenient in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all men. That this observation is true; that, I say, under the names of persons representing Christ (or of things, we may add, adumbrating his things) many things are intimated principally concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and to things also) which do not agree to them; many things were promised which appear never accomplished, except after an improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wideness of interpretation; such as do not well seem to suit the nature of true histories and serious promises: thus, for instance, many things are foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous state of the Jewish church; which history and experience do testify never (according to strictness of literal acception, yea not in any tolerable degree, near the height of what the words import) to have come to pass: thus also, as the apostle to the Hebrews argueth, effects are attributed to the Jewish rites and sacrifices, which according to the nature of things cannot belong to them, otherwise than as

1 Pet. i. 12.

Isa. xxv. 8.

Heb. x. 4.

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substitutes and shadows of things more high in substance and efficacy: thus also what is with solemn oath promised to Solomon (concerning the vast extent and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace, and prosperity; together with his mighty acts, and successful achievements) doth not appear directly in any competent measure to have been accomplished: thus also David (as St. Peter in the second of the Acts observeth, and groundeth his argumentation on it) speaketh divers things of himself, which cannot be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him: such things therefore (having some truth under them) are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future more perfect state of things under the Messias; to concern him (who was to be *the end of the law*) and his dispensation, which was to be the accomplishment of all things predicted and presignified: this is that which St. Austin signifieth, when he saith of Christ, that *Him all the promises of the Jewish nation, all their prophecies, priesthoods, sacrifices, their temple, and all their sacraments whatever did resound,* or express [t].

Ps. xlv. lxxii. lxxxiii. &c.

Acts ii. 29.

Rom. x. 4. Luke xxii. 37. 1 Pet. i. 10, &c.

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the New Testament; but they agree, as to their general importance, to the sense of the ancient Jews, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of the scriptures: they did suppose every where a *Midrash,* or mystical sense; which they very studiously (even to an excess of curiosity and

[t] Quem Christum—omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetiæ, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, et cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt. *Aug. ad Volus. Ep.* 3.

diligence) searched after: it was a constant and confident opinion of their doctors, that all things in Moses's law were typical, and capable of allegorical exposition; and Philo's writings (composed immediately after our Saviour's times) do shew that opinion then to have been passable. We have also several instances and intimations thereof in the New Testament: neither is it probable, that our Lord and the apostles would, in their discourses and disputations with the Jews, have used this way of alleging and interpreting passages of scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it. SERM. LXXVI. Vid. Capell. in Exerc. ad Zohar.

Why God should choose to express matters of this nature in such a manner, we need not to determine; it might be perhaps for reasons only known to himself, above our ken or cognizance: yet divers probable reasons may be assigned for it, yea some more than probable, seeing they are expressed or hinted in scripture. It might be for a decent and harmonious discrimination of times, of dispensations, of persons; it might be from the depth of things to conciliate reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of attaining thereto; it might be by exercise to improve the understandings of men, to inflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them modest and humble; it might be for occasion to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word, and to convey special gifts of interpretation; it might be to conceal some things from some persons unworthy or unfit to know them, especially from haughty and self-conceited persons; it might be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great events; such as was the misusing Vid. Chrys. tom. vi. p. 649, &c. 658, &c. Rev. ii. 7. xiii. 18. xvii. 9. Matt. xiii. 9. xxiv. 15. Dan. ix. 1. John v. 39. Luke xxiv. 45. 1 Cor. xii. 10. xiv. 26. Eph. i. 9, 10. Matt. xiii. 13. xi. 25. vii. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 8. Acts iii. 17.

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and persecuting our Lord: for such reasons it might be, and there is no good reason against it; for it cannot be supposed necessary, that all things should be plainly discovered at all times, and to all persons; it is evident that some things are couched in parabolical and mysterious expressions; it is particularly the manner of prophetical instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season, nor suitable to every capacity; but reserved for times, and persons, for which the divine wisdom only knows them most proper.

Gal. iv. 4. Eph. i. 10. 1 Tim. ii. 6.

These things being thus premised, we come to our particular case, and say, that (according to what our Lord and his apostles teach) the Messiah's being to suffer was in divers passages of the ancient scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing itself determined to be, there are peculiar reasons, why it rather so, than in a more open manner, should be represented, contained in those words of Tertullian: *The sacrament indeed,* saith he, *of Christ's passion ought to have been figured in the* (ancient) *predications; forasmuch as that the more incredible it was,* (*if it should have been preached nakedly,*) *the more offensive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be overshadowed, that the difficulty of understanding it might be cause of seeking of God's grace*[u]. Supposing it also that it should be, it is plain that the passages about Abel, Isaac, Josias, Jeremiah, and the like,

[u] Utique sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in prædicationibus oportuerat, quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum futurum, quantoque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum; ut difficultas intellectûs gratiam Dei quæreret. *Tert. in Jud.* 10.

may congruously be applied thereto; that the elevation of the brazen serpent, and the slaying the paschal lamb may appositely represent it; the Jewish priests, with all their sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in, and accommodated thereto: these things indeed by themselves solitarily are not apt peremptorily to evince that it should be; yet do they handsomely suit it, and adorn the supposition thereof; according to the notion premised about the figurative relation between the matters of the old world before the Messias, and the new one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the Messiah's sufferings were implied in the afflictions ascribed to his representative king David, such as he in several Psalms (in the 35th, 69th, 109th, 118th, and especially in the 22d Psalm) describeth them; wherein divers passages, expressing the extreme sadness and forlornness of his condition, occur, which by the history of his life do not so well, according to the literal signification of words, appear congruous to his person; which therefore there is a necessity, or at least much reason, that they should be applied to the Messias, whom that holy king did represent. SERM. LXXVI.

Which being admitted, comparing the passages we find there to that which befell Jesus, we may observe an admirable harmony; there being scarce any part of his affliction in his life, or any circumstance thereof at his death, which is not in express and emphatical terms there set out. There we have expressed his low and despicable estate; (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and despised of the people:*)—the causeless hatred and enmity of the populacy and of the great ones Ps. xxii. 6.

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toward him; (*They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty; they compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause:*) —the ingrateful requital for all the good intended and performed by him; (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love:*)—their rejecting him; (*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner:*)—their insidious and calumnious proceedings against him; (*Without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.* And, *False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.* And, *The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue:*)—their bitter insulting over him in his affliction; (*But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me:*) *They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded:* καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, *and to the smart of my wounds they have added;* (say the LXX.)—their scornful reviling, flouting, and mocking him; (*All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him.* And, *I became a reproach unto them; when they looked upon me, they shaked their heads: They opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it.* Ἐπείρασάν με,

Psal. lxix. 4. xxxv. 7. cix. 3.

Psal. xxxv. 12. cix. 5. cxviii. 22.

Ps. xxxv. 7. 11. cix. 2.

Psal. xxxv. 15. lxix. 26.

Psal. xxii. 7, 8.

Ps. cix. 25. xxxv. 21, 16.

ἐξεμυκτήρισάν με μυκτηρισμὸν, ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τοὺς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν *They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me:*)—their cruel and contemptuous usage of him; (*Dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me:*)—their abusive dealing with him, when he in his distress called for some refreshment; (*They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink:*)—their disposal of his garments upon his suffering; (*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture:*)—his being deserted of his friends and followers, and thence destitute of all consolation; (*I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children;—I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none:*)—the sense of God's withholding his favour and help; (*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me?*)—his charitable disposition and demeanour toward his enemies and persecutors; (*But as for me, when they were sick,* (*when they did trouble me,* say the LXX.) *my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled myself with fasting, and my prayer returned into my own bosom. I behaved myself as though it had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*) Which passages, and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the gospels, I need not to shew; we do, I presume, all of us well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable

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Psal. xxii. 16, 17.

Psal. lxix. 21.

Psal. xxii. 18.

Psal. lxix. 8, 20.

Psal. xxii. 1. lxix. 17.

Ἐν τῇ αὐτοὺς σαρκοῦν με. Psal. xxxv. 13, 14.

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history, to be able ourselves to make the application.

But there further are not only such oblique intimations, or significations of this matter, shrouded under the coverture of other persons and names; but very direct and immediate predictions concerning the Messiah's being to suffer, most clearly expressed: that whole famous chapter (the 53d) of Isaiah doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends, and consequences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically represented: his appearing meanness, (*He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him:*)—the disgrace, contempt, repulses, and rejection he underwent, (*He is despised and rejected of men—we hid our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not:*)—his afflicted state, (*He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted:*)—the bitter and painful manner of his affliction, (He *was stricken;* he *bare stripes;* he *was wounded and bruised:*)—his being accused, adjudged, and condemned as a malefactor, (*He was taken from prison and from judgment—he was numbered among the transgressors:*)—his death consequent, (*He poured out his soul unto death; he was cut out of the land of the living:*)—the design and end of his sufferings; they were appointed and inflicted by Divine Providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the expiation of our sins, and our salvation; (*It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offer-*

Isa. liii.

Ver. 2.

Ver. 3.

Ver. 3, 4.

Ver. 4, 5.

Ver. 8, 12.

Ver. 10, 5, 4, 8, 6, 12.

for sin—he was wounded for our transgres- SERM.
s, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chas- LXXVI.
nent of our peace was upon him, and with his
es we are healed—surely he hath borne our
fs, and carried our sorrows—for the trans-
sion of my people he was stricken—the Lord
laid on him the iniquities of us all:)—his sus-
ing all this with a willing, quiet, humble pa-
ce, and perfect meekness, (*He was oppressed,* Ver. 7.
he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth;
brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a
p before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not
mouth:)—his charitable praying for his persecu-
, and designing their welfare, (*He made inter-* Ver. 12.
ion for the transgressors:)—the blessed con-
ences and happy success of his sufferings, in the
ersion and justification of men; in performing
's will and work; in being satisfied, rewarded,
exalted himself, (*He shall see his seed, he shall* Is. liii. 10.
ong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord 11, 12.
ll prosper in his hand. He shall see of the
ail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his
owledge shall my righteous servant justify many:
will divide him a portion with the great, and
hall divide the spoil with the strong: which
ages, as they do most exactly suit unto Jesus,
might in a sort constitute a true historical nar-
n of what he did endure, together with the doc-
s delivered in the gospel concerning the intents
effects of his sufferings, so that they did, accord-
to the intention of the divine Spirit, relate to
Messias, may from several considerations be
e apparent; the context and coherence of all
passage with the matters precedent and sub-

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sequent, the which plainly do respect the Messias and his times, do argue it; *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!* and, *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently*, &c. are passages immediately going before; to which this chapter is knit in way of continuation; and immediately after it doth follow, *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear*, &c. being a no less perspicuous than elegant description of the church, enlarged by accession of the Gentiles, which was to be brought to pass by the Messias. The general scope of this whole prophecy enforceth the same conclusion; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other person imaginable beside the Messias doth further evince it; so high are the things ascribed to the suffering person; as that he should *bear the sins of all God's people, and heal them;* that he should *by his knowledge justify many*, (or the multitude;) that *the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand* to these grand purposes; that God would *divide him a portion with the great, and that he should divide the spoil with the strong:* the magnificency and importance of which sayings (rightly understood and weighed) do well agree to the Messias, but not to any other person or simple man: whence if the ancient Jews had reason to believe a Messias was to come, (as they with general consent did suppose they had,) they had as much reason to apply this place, as any other, to him, and thence to acknowledge that he was designed to be an eminent sufferer. And indeed divers of the ancient Targumists and most learned Rabbins did expound this place of the one Messias, which was to come; as the *Pu-*

Isa. lii. 7, 13.

Isa. liv. 1, &c.

gio fidei, and other learned writers, do by several express testimonies declare. This place also discovereth the vanity of that figment devised by some later Jews; who, to evade it, and to oppose Jesus, have affirmed there was to be a double Messias; one, who should be much afflicted; another, who should greatly prosper; since we may observe, that here both great afflictions and glorious performances concurrently are ascribed to the same person. SERM. LXXVI.

The same things are by parts also clearly foretold in other places of this prophet, and in other prophetical scriptures; by Isaiah again in the chapter immediately preceding, *Behold*, saith God there, *my servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high*: there is God's servant (he, who in way of excellency is such, that is, in the style of this prophet, the Messias) in his real glorious capacity. It followeth concerning his external appearance; *His visage was so marred more than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men.* And again, in the 49th chapter; *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.* What can be more express and clear, than that it is signified here that the Messias, who should subject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknowledgment and veneration of himself, was to be despised by men, to be detested by the Jewish people, to appear in a servile and base condition? The same prophet doth again, in the 50th chapter, bring him in speaking thus: *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the* Isa. lii. 13, 14. Isa. xlix. 7. Isa. l. 6.

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hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. His offending the Jews, so as thereby to aggravate their sins, and accelerate their punishments, is also thus expressed by the same prophet: *And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*

Is. viii. 14. (Psal. ii. 2.)

The prophet Zechariah doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings, his low condition in those words; *Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; lowly, and riding upon an ass;* (that is, *pauper*, mean and sorry to appearance.) His manner of death in those words: *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.* And again; *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn,* &c. The prophet Daniel also in that place, from which probably the name Messias was taken, and which most expressly mentioneth him, saith, that *after sixty-two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself.* Now from all these passages of scripture (beside divers others to the same purpose, observable by those whose industry is assisted by divine illumination) we may well conclude with our Lord, Ὅτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστόν· *That thus it was written, and thus* (according to the prophet's foreshewing) *it was to happen, that the Christ should suffer;* suffer in a life of penury and disgrace, in a death of sorrow and shame.

Zech. ix. 9.

Zech. xiii. 7.

Zech. xii. 10.

Dan. ix. 26.

Luke xxiv. 46.

That it was to fall out thus, might also be well inferred by reasons grounded upon the qualities of the Messiah's person, and upon the nature of his performances, such as they are described in prophetical scripture: he was to be really, and plainly to appear, a person of most admirable virtue and goodness; but never (as even pagan philosophers have observed) was, or can there be any such without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an universal pattern to men of all sorts (especially to the greatest part of men, that is, to the poor and afflicted) of *all righteousness;* to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty; (*humility, patience, meekness, charity, self-denial, entire resignation* to God's will:) this he should not have had opportunity or advantage of doing, should he have been high, wealthy, splendid, and prosperous in secular matters: he was to exercise great pity and sympathy toward all mankind; toward the doing which it was requisite that he should himself taste and feel the inconveniences, troubles, pains, and sorrows incident to us. He was to advance the repute of spiritual goods and eternal blessings, depressing the value of these corporeal and temporal things, which men do so fondly admire and dote on: the most compendious and effectual way of doing which was by an exemplary neglect or rejection of worldly glories and enjoyments; refusing the honours, profits, and pleasures here, adjoined to a high state. He was by the most kindly, gentle, and peaceable means to erect a spiritual kingdom; by pure force of reason to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love and obedience of God;

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Plato, Seneca, &c.

Vide Theodoti Orat. in Eph. 1. Concil. p. 997.

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by wise instruction to raise in us the hopes of future recompenses in heaven; to the accomplishment of which purposes temporal glory (working on the carnal apprehensions and affections of men) had rather been prejudicial than conducible. He was to accomplish and manage his great designs by means supernatural and divine, the which would surely become more conspicuous by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was also most highly to merit from God, for himself and for us; (to merit God's high approbation of what he did, God's favour and grace to us;) this he could not perform so well, as by willingly enduring, for God's sake, and in our behalf, the most hard and grievous things. He was, in fine, designed *perfectly to save us*, and consequently to appease God's wrath, to satisfy divine justice, to expiate our sins; whereto it was requisite that he should undergo what we had deserved, being punished and afflicted for us.

Now that Jesus our Lord did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared by the prophets concerning the Messias, we need not, by minutely relating the known history of his life and death, make out any further, since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adversary can deny it: I shall therefore conclude, that it is a clear and certain truth, which St. Peter in our text affirmeth, that *those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

Rev. i. 5, 6. Now, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to*

him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. SERM. LXXVI.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. v. 13.

SERMON LXXVII.

A WHIT-SUNDAY SERMON OF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Acts ii. 38.

——*And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

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AMONG the divers reasonable grounds and ends of the observing festival solemnities, (such as are comforting the poor by hospitable relief, refreshing the weary labourer by cessation from ordinary toil, maintaining good-will among neighbours by cheerful and free conversation, quickening our spirits and raising our fancies by extraordinary representations and divertisements, infusing and preserving good humour in people[a]; such as are also the decent conspiring in public expressions of special reverence to God, withdrawing our minds from secular cares, and engaging them to spiritual meditations,) the two principal designs of them seem to be these:

Esth. ix. Deut. xvi.

1. The affording occasion (or rather imposing a

[a] Θεοὶ δὲ οἰκτείραντες τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπίπονον πεφυκὸς γένος, ἀναπαύλας τε αὐτοῖς τῶν πόνων ἐτάξαντο, τὰς τῶν ἑορτῶν ἀμοιβὰς τοῖς θεοῖς. Plato 2. de Leg.

Legum conditores festos instituerunt dies, ut ad hilaritatem homines publice cogerentur, tanquam necessarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum. *Sen. de tranq. an.* 15.

constraint upon us) with a competent frequency to attend unto, to consider upon, to instruct ourselves and others in the mysterious doctrines and institutions of our religion. SERM. LXXVII.

2. The engaging us seasonably to practise that great duty of thankfully remembering and praising God for those eminent mercies and favours, which by his great grace and goodness have been vouchsafed to us.

For these purposes chiefly did God himself appoint the Jewish festivals; for instance, the passover, the reason of which being instituted is thus expressed; *that thou mayest remember the day, when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt, all the days of thy life:* which words imply that the observation of that solemnity did serve to preserve the memory, yea the continual remembrance of that so notable a blessing, which otherwise might have been totally forgotten, or seldom considered; the same did also suggest occasion of inquiry concerning the reasons of its appointment, procuring consequently needful information in that material point of their religion; as doth appear by those words of God, *And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover—.* Deut. xvi. 3. Exod. xii. 26, 27.

In compliance with which prudent designs, the Christian church, from her first infancy, hath embraced the opportunity of recommending to her children the observation of her chief holy festivals, continuing the time, and retaining the name, although changing or improving the matter and reason of those ancient ones; the divine Providence Aug. de Civ. Dei, x. 4.

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concurring to further such proceeding, by so ordering the events of things, that the seasons of dispensing the evangelical blessings should fall in with those, wherein the legal benefits most resembling and representing them were commemorated; that so there might be as well a happy coincidence of time, as correspondence in matter between the ancient and new solemnities; whence as the exhibition of evangelical doctrines and mysteries did meet with minds more suitably prepared to entertain them, and as less innovation from former usage did appear, (a thing observable to be respected in most, or all the positive institutions of our religion,) so withal Christians were engaged, while they considered the fresh greater mercies by God vouchsafed to them, to reflect also upon the favours, from the same stock of goodness, indulged by him to his ancient people; that as those should chiefly be remembered, so these should not wholly be forgotten: thus did God dispose, that our Saviour should then suffer, when the Paschal Lamb was to be offered; or that the redemption of the world from sin and misery should then be celebrated by us, when the deliverance from the Egyptian slavery was commemorated by them: and so (that we may approach to our purpose) at the time of Pentecost, when the Jews were obliged to *rejoice before the Lord*, rendering thanks unto him for the harvest newly gathered in, and the earth's good fruits (the main supports and comforts of this life) were by God's blessing bestowed on them, then did God bountifully impart the first-fruits of his holy Spirit, the food of our souls and refreshment of our hearts; then did he cause his

Deut. xvi.

labourers to put their sickle into the spiritual harvest; converting souls, and gathering them as mature fruits into the garners of the church. SERM. LXXVII.

At the very season also (which is remarkable) that the Law was delivered to the Jews, and the ancient covenant established which did happen at Pentecost, as may be probably collected from the text, and is commonly supposed by the Jewish doctors, who therefore called this feast שמחה תורת, *the joy* (or joyful feast) *of the Law*, in signification of their joy, using then to crown their heads with garlands, and strew their houses with green herbs; at that very time was the Christian law most signally promulged, and the new covenant's ratification most solemnly declared by the miraculous effusion of the divine Spirit. Exod. xix. 1.

The benefit therefore and blessing, which at this time we are bound especially to consider and commemorate[b], is in effect the publication and establishment of the covenant evangelical, the foundation of all our hopes, and all our claims to happiness; but more immediately and directly the donation of the Holy Spirit to the Christian church, and to all its members; for the better understanding and more truly valuing of which most excellent benefit, let us briefly declare the nature and design thereof.

Almighty God, seeing the generality of mankind alienated from himself by gross ignorance of its duty toward him, and by habitual inclinations to violate his holy laws, (originally implanted by him in our nature, or anciently revealed to our first parents,) immersed in error, enslaved to vice, and obnoxious

[b] Πεντηκοστὴν ἑορτάζομεν, καὶ πνεύματος ἐπιδημίαν, καὶ προθεσμίαν ἐπαγγελίας, καὶ ἐλπίδος συμπλήρωσιν, &c. Naz. Orat. 44.

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to the woful consequences of them, severe punishment and extreme misery; was pleased in his immense goodness and pity to design its rescue from that sad condition; and in pursuance of that gracious design, did resolve upon expedients the most admirable and most efficacious that could be: for to redeem men from the tyranny of sin and hell, to reconcile them to himself, to recover them into a happy state, he sent his own only beloved Son out of his bosom into this world, clothed with our nature; by him, as by a Plenipotentiary Commissioner from himself, inviting all men to return unto him; declaring himself, by the meritorious obedience, the expiatory passion, the effectual intercession of his dear Son, abundantly satisfied for, and ready to grant a full pardon of, all offences committed against him in their state of error and estrangement; to admit them into a state of present indemnity and peace, yea to settle them in perpetual alliance and friendship with himself, upon most fair and gentle terms; namely, that, renouncing their erroneous principles, and reforming their vicious courses of life, they cheerfully would embrace his merciful overtures, and thereafter conform their lives to his righteous laws; the which, together with all his good intentions concerning them, he, by the same blessed agent, clearly discovered to them; fully by him instructing them in their duty, and strongly encouraging them to the performance thereof by the promise of most bountiful rewards; his certain love and favour attended with endless joy and bliss: thus did, as St. Paul expresseth it, *the saving grace of God appear unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live*

Tit. ii. 11, 12.

soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, expecting that blessed hope. SERM. LXXVII.

But to render this wonderfully gracious design succesful, in a way of wisdom and reasonable proceeding accommodated to the capacities of human nature, it was requisite, that there should be provided convincing arguments to persuade men of the truth and reality of these things, (that indeed such an extraordinary agent, with such a message, was come from heaven,) effectual means of admonishing and exciting men to a heedful advertency toward them, competent motives to a cordial acceptance of them; a power also sufficient, notwithstanding their natural impotency and instability, to continue them in the belief, to uphold them in the practice of the duties prescribed, in the performance of the conditions required.

For if it were not very credible, that God had truly those intentions toward us, or if we did not much regard the overture of them, or if we did not conceive the business highly to concern us; or if, resolving to comply with the gospel, we yet were unable to discharge the conditions thereof, the design would totally be frustrated, and of itself come to nothing. To prevent which disappointment of his merciful intentions, Almighty God did abundantly provide, in a manner and measure suitable to the glorious importance of them; for to the ministry of his eternal Wisdom, he adjoined the efficacy of his eternal love, and blessed Spirit; the which not only conducted God our Saviour into his fleshly tabernacle, and with *unmeasurable communications* of himself did continually reside within him, but also did attend him in the conspicuous performance of

John iii. 34.

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numberless miraculous works, implying divine power and goodness, as exceeding not only any natural, but all created power, (such as were by mere word and will healing the sick and restoring the maimed, ejecting evil spirits, discerning the secret thoughts of men, foretelling contingent events, reviving the dead, raising himself from the grave;) which works, some expressly, others by parity of reason, are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; for, *If*, saith our Lord, *I by the Spirit of God cast out devils*—and, *God*, saith St. Peter, *anointed him with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil:* and, *Who*, saith St. Paul, *was declared to be the Son of God, according to the Holy Spirit, by the resurrection from the dead:* so did God afford the most evident attestation that could be to the truth of our Saviour's quality, commission, and doctrine; by so clear and rousing significations did God invite men to take notice of these things.

Matt. xii. 28.

Acts x. 38.

Rom. i. 4.

But further to induce them heartily to comply with these gracious overtures, and to render them thoroughly available to the purpose designed, the salvation of men, according to the terms prescribed of faith in God, and obedience to his commandments, God was pleased further to resolve, and he faithfully did promise, that he would impart the same blessed Spirit, as a continual guide and assistant to all those, who seriously would entertain those tenders of mercy, sincerely resolving the performance of the conditions.

Now although the natural and ordinary manner of this divine Spirit's operation (like that of all spirits and more subtile substances) is not by violent

and sensible impressions [c], but rather in way of imperceptible penetration, or gentle insinuating of itself into the subject upon which it worketh, hardly discovering itself otherwise than by the notable effects resulting from it; and although likewise the proper and principal effects thereof, according to divine designation, do relate to the furthering our performance of the said conditions requisite toward our salvation, that is, to the cherishing our faith and quickening our obedience; disposing men to perform virtuous actions, rather than to achieve wondrous exploits; yet more fully to satisfy the doubtful, to convince the incredulous (to confound the obstinate) world about the truth of his intentions, more illustriously to manifest the completion of his promise, more surely to fortify the faithful against the scandals and temptations, which their profession would incur [d], God was pleased after our Lord's ascension, and when the apostolical promulgation of the Christian doctrine did commence, to dispense both to the teachers and the disciples thereof more liberal communications of that Holy Spirit, attended with notorious, strange, and wonderful effects, apt to provoke the admiration of men, to persuade their judgments, to prevail upon their affections, to produce within them strong desires of partaking so high a privilege and excellent endowment. SERM. LXXVII.

Acts ii. 12, 43. iv. 14. ix. 11, 16. 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

The memorial therefore of that most gracious and

[c] Καὶ γὰρ σὺ θείας ἀπέλαυσας χάριτος βαπτιζόμενος, καὶ πνεύματος μετέσχες, εἰ καὶ μὴ πρὸς τὸ σημεῖα ποιεῖν, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἀρκεῖ πρὸς τὸ πολιτείαν ὀρθὴν, καὶ ἠκριβωμένην λαβεῖν. Chrys. tom. vi. Orat. 12. ad Demet.

[d] Τῶν γὰρ χαρισμάτων τῶν πνευματικῶν τὰ μὲν ἀόρατά ἐστιν καὶ πίστει καταλαμβάνεται μόνῃ, τὰ δὲ καὶ αἰσθητὸν ἐνδείκνυται σημεῖον πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀπίστων πληροφορίαν. Chrys. tom. v. Orat. 88.

SERM. LXXVII. glorious dispensation, the Christian church wisely and piously hath continually preserved, obliging us at this time peculiarly to bless God for that incomparable and inestimable gift, conferred then most visibly upon the church, and still really bestowed upon every particular member, duly incorporated thereinto.

I say bestowed upon every particular member of the church; for the evangelical covenant doth extend to every Christian; and a principal ingredient thereof is the collation of this Spirit: which is the Luke xi. 20. *finger of God*, whereby (according to the prophet Jer. xxxi. 33. Jeremiah's description of that covenant) *God's law is put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts; inscribed*, as St. Paul allusively speaketh, 2 Cor. iii. 3. Heb. viii. 10. Ezek. xi. 19. John vi. 45. *not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart;* not only, as the Jewish law represented, from without to the senses, but impressed within upon the mind and affections; whence God's Spirit Πνεῦμα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. Eph. i. 13. is called the *Spirit of promise*, the donation thereof being the peculiar promise of the gospel; and the end of our Saviour's undertaking is by St. Paul de- Gal. iii. 14. clared, *that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith*, that is, by embracing Christianity might partake thereof, according to God's promise; and the apostolical ministry or exhibition of the gos- Διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος. pel is styled *the ministration of the Spirit;* and *tasting of the heavenly gift, and participation of the* 2 Cor. iii. 8. Heb. vi. 4. *Holy Ghost* is part of a Christian's charter; and the susception of Christianity is thus described by 2 Thess. ii. 13. St. Paul; *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath chosen you from the beginning to*

salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: and our Saviour instructed Nicodemus, that *no man can enter into the kingdom of God* (that is, become a Christian, or subject of God's spiritual kingdom) *without being regenerated by water, and by the Spirit,* that is, without baptism, and the spiritual grace attending it; according as St. Peter doth in the words adjoining to our text imply, that the reception of the Holy Spirit is annexed to holy baptism: *Repent,* saith he, *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise* (that great promise of the Holy Ghost) *is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call;* that is, the Holy Spirit is promised to all, how far soever distant in place or time, whoever shall be invited unto, and shall embrace the Christian profession. St. John also maketh it to be the distinctive mark of those, in whom Christ abideth, and who dwell in Christ, that is, of all true Christians, to have this Spirit; *Hereby,* saith he, *we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us;* and, *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.* And St. Paul denieth him to be a good Christian who is destitute thereof; *Now,* saith he, *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his:* and, *Know ye not,* saith he to the Corinthians, *that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* that is, Do ye not understand this to be a common privilege of all Christians, such as ye profess yourselves to be? And the con-

SERM. LXXVII.

John iii. 5.

Acts ii. 38, 39.

1 John iii. 24.

1 John iv. 13.

Rom. viii. 9.

1 Cor. iii. 16.

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version of men to Christianity he thus expresseth; *After the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared; not by any righteous works which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* And all pious dispositions qualifying us for entrance into heaven and happiness (faith, charity, devotion, every grace, every virtue) are represented to be *fruits of the Holy Spirit:* and the union of all Christians into one body, the catholic society of all truly faithful people, doth, according to St. Paul, result from this one Spirit, as a common soul animating and actuating them: *For*, saith he, *by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and have all been made to drink of one Spirit.*

Tit. iii. 4, 5.

Gal. v. 22. Eph. v. 9. Rom. iv. 5.

1 Cor. xii. 13.

In fine, whatever some few persons, or some petty sects (as the Pelagians of old, the Socinians now) may have deemed, it hath been the doctrine constantly, and with very general consent delivered in the catholic church, that to all persons by the holy mystery of baptism duly initiated to Christianity, or admitted into the communion of Christ's body, the grace of God's holy Spirit certainly is bestowed, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue then undertaken by them; enlightening their minds, rectifying their wills, purifying their affections, directing and assisting them in their practice; the which holy gift (if not abused, ill treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill behaviour) will perpetually be continued, improved, and increased to them: it is therefore by Tertullian (in his Prescriptions against heretics) reckoned as part of that fundamental rule, which was grounded upon the gene-

ral tradition and consent of the Christian church, SERM. that *Christ had sent the virtue of the Holy Ghost* LXXVII. *in his room, which doth act believers*[e]; to which that article doth answer of the Apostolical Creed, in which we profess to *believe the Holy Ghost*; meaning, I suppose, thereby, not only the bare existence of the Holy Ghost, but also its gracious communication and energy.

Since therefore the collation of this eminent gift and favour so nearly doth concern us all; seeing it is our present duty more especially to praise and bless God for it; seeing also we are wont to commensurate our gratitude to our estimation of the benefit, unto which it relateth; let us a little consider the worth and excellency of this divine gift conferred on us.

That it is transcendently valuable we may in general hence collect, that even in our Lord's esteem it did not only countervail, but in a manner surmount the benefit of his presence; Συμφέρει, *It is*, said he, *expedient* (or profitable) *for you that I go away*; God having designed, that my absence shall be supplied by the Comforter's more beneficial presence: and wonderfully beneficial surely must that presence be, which could not only compensate, but render advantageous the loss of that most benign and sweet conversation, that tender and watchful inspection, that wholesome and powerful advice, that clear and lively pattern of all goodness shining forth in our Saviour's life upon his disciples. Could there be a more indulgent Master, a more discreet Guide, a more delightful Companion, a more faithful Friend, John xvi. 7.

[e] *Tert. de Præsc.* 13.——misisse vicariam vim Spiritus Sancti, qui credentes agat.

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a mightier Protector, a surer Assistant, a sweeter Comforter than he? Yes, it seemeth that our Saviour did apprehend, that upon some accounts those benefits with greater advantage might accrue to them by the gift of his Spirit, than by his own immediate presence; that it by internal operation could more clearly inform the mind, more strongly incline the will, more vigorously affect the heart, than any exterior word or example could do: neither could our Saviour, according to the condition of his humanity, limited to particularities of time and place, so perfectly correspond to the various exigencies of mankind, as that omnipotent Spirit, intimately present to, uniformly diffused through all things: him therefore did our Saviour leave the guardian of his otherwise orphan disciples; him did he substitute to undergo the care and tuition of them, to conduct them in the right way, to preserve them from dangers, to comfort them in distresses, to manage all their concernments, to be their counsellor, monitor, advocate, and patron; by him he meant fully to make good his word, *that he would be with them till the end of this world*[f].

Οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς. John xiv. 18.

But more distinctly to survey the many benefits and advantages proceeding from this excellent gift unto us, we may observe, that on it the foundation, the improvement, the completion of all our good and happiness do depend; that to the Holy Spirit in truth and justice are to be ascribed, 1. our better state and being; 2. our spiritual powers and abilities; 3. our good and acceptable performances; whatever we are, whatever we can do, whatever we actually do perform as Christians.

[f] Ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος. Matt. xxviii. 20.

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1. We owe to the Holy Spirit our spiritual state and being; our spiritual life, our freedom, our honourable condition.

It is by virtue of this *quickening Spirit*, that from death and corruption we are raised to an immortal and indefectible state of life; that, as St. Paul saith, we, that *were dead in trespasses and sins, are quickened together with Christ*; we by this *incorruptible seed are born again*; not, as formerly, to a life of vanity and misery, or to the enjoyment of a few transitory delights, tempered with many vexatious inconveniences, pains, and troubles; but to sure capacities of most solid and durable contentments, *to a living hope of an incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for us.*

πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν. 1 Cor. xv. 45. John vi. 63. Eph. ii. 1, 5. 1 Pet. i. 23. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

It is thereby we are free men, enjoying a true and perfect liberty; being enfranchised from divers intolerable slaveries, to which we naturally are subjected, and from which otherwise we could not be exempted; from the dominion of a rigorous law [g], which prescribeth hard duties, but doth not afford strength to perform them; apt to condemn us, but not able to convert us; from the clamorous accusations of a guilty conscience, with anxious fears of punishment, that *spirit of bondage unto fear*, of which St. Paul speaketh; from the tyranny of a most crafty, spiteful, and cruel enemy, that wicked one who did *captivate us at his pleasure*, and detained us under his power; from the no less unjust, no less mischievous domination of our own flesh, or natural concupiscence, imposing grievous tasks and destructive necessities upon us; *It is*, saith St. Paul, *the law*

Gal. iv. 24. Rom. viii. 15. 2 Tim. ii. 26. Eph. ii. 2. Rom. viii. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 17.

[g] Lex os omnium potuit obstruere, non potuit mentem convertere. *Ambr.*

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of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which setteth us free from these laws of sin and of death; so that, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

From such base thraldoms we thereby are redeemed, and not only so, but are advanced to an honourable condition, are ennobled with illustrious relations, are entitled to glorious privileges: all the benefits and immunities contained in the charter of the new Jerusalem, all the advantages and privileges appropriated to God's court and family thereby appertain unto us; for *we have*, saith St. Paul, *access by one Spirit unto the Father*, and are thence *no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God*: by this *holy unction* we are consecrated *kings and priests unto God*; by participation of this *immortal seed* we are engrafted into alliance with the heavenly King, become children of God, brethren of Christ, heirs of paradise, (an infinitely better paradise than that from which we formerly were excluded;) for this is that πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, that Spirit which constituteth us the sons of God, qualifying us to be so by dispositions resembling God, and filial affections toward him; certifying us that we are so, and causing us by a free instinct *to cry, Abba, Father*, running into his bosom of love, and flying under the wings of his mercy in all our needs and distresses; whence *as many as are led by the Spirit, they*, saith St. Paul, *are the sons of God*; and, *the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God*; yea, which may seem yet a further pitch of dignity, we, by intervention of this Spirit, are united and incorporated into Christ himself, being made

Eph. ii. 18, 19.

Rev. i. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Rom. viii. 15. John i. 13.

Gal. iv. 6.

Rom. viii.

Rom viii. 16.

living members of his body, partaking a common life and sense with him; by it we are compacted into the same spiritual edifice, dedicated to the worship and inhabitation of God; our bodies and souls are made temples of his divinity, thrones of his majesty, orbs of his celestial light, paradises of his blissful presence; for, *In whom*, saith St. Paul, *ye are built together for an inhabitation of God through the Spirit*; and, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* SERM. LXXVII. Eph. ii. 22. 1 Cor. iii. 16.

By the Holy Spirit we are instated in these unconceivably glorious privileges, and by it only we are assured of them, to our comfort; the gift of it, as it is a great part of them, and the chief cause, so it is a sure confirmation and pledge; *Ye*, saith St. Paul, *were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance*; and, *It is God who did establish us with you in Christ, and anointed us, and also sealed us, and gave the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts:* all which phrases do import the same thing, that is, a comfortable assurance concerning the reality of the benefits by divine grace exhibited and promised to us. Eph. i. 13. Rom. viii. 9, 11. 2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

2. Neither only relatively and extrinsecally is our state bettered and exalted from death to life, from slavery to freedom, from baseness to dignity; but ourselves answerably are changed and amended by the same Holy Spirit, with a real and intrinsecal alteration, transforming us into other things, much different from what we were in our former natural state; by that *renovation of the Holy Ghost*, of which St. Paul speaketh, we are, saith he, *renewed in the spirit of our mind*; so that not only the de- 2 Cor. v. 17. Tit. iii. 5. Eph. iv. 23.

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cayed frame of our soul is thereby repaired and reformed, but its powers are much improved and enlarged; we are thence endued with new and better faculties, as it were; with quicker apprehensions, with sincerer judgments, with righter inclinations, with nobler passions, than we had before, yea, than we could have had in our original state; so that in the language of holy scripture we thence become

Eph. iv. 24. 2Cor. v. 17. Col. iii. 10. Eph. iv. 23. ii. 10. Col. iii. 10.

new men, and new creatures, created according to God in righteousness and true holiness; according to God, that is, in conformity to the divine perfections of rectitude in mind and will, so as to resemble God in a higher degree, and more worthy respects, than formerly. Our father Adam was made

1 Cor. xv. 45.

εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν, a creature endued with life and sense, furnished with powers and appetites, disposing to acquire, preserve, and enjoy the conveniences agreeable to that frame; and we naturally are

1 Cor. ii. 14.

ψυχικοὶ ἄνθρωποι, *animal men*; such as naturally do apprehend, do affect, do pursue things concerning this present life; the pleasures of sense, and the satisfactions of fancy; freedom from want and pain, security from danger and disturbance, together with the means we suppose conducible to those, wealth, honour, and power; these are those

Θελήματα σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν. Eph. ii. 3.

desires of the flesh and of the mind, the things which according to our natural temper and frame we like and approve; which most men therefore do highly value, passionately love, and earnestly seek: nor doth nature only incline us to a complacence in these things, but customary fruition greatly endeareth them to us; so that we continually improve our acquaintance, and contract a firmer alliance with them; but spiritual and divine things ([b]*the things of*

[b] Τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ Θεοῦ. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

the Spirit of God, as St. Paul calleth them) we cannot *receive;* that is, simply of ourselves, without aid of another interior principle, we have no capacity to apprehend them, no disposition to entertain them, no strength to pursue them; they, as the apostle saith, *are foolishness to us,* that is, incongruous to our prejudicate notions, and insipid to our corrupt palates. SERM. LXXVII. Δίκαιοι.

Such doctrines as these; that our felicity consisteth not in affluence of temporal enjoyments, but in dispositions of soul crossing our humours, curbing our appetites, and quelling our passions; in conformity of practice to rules distasteful to our sense; in the love and favour of an invisible Being; in reversion of an estate not to be possessed until after our death in another world; that none of these present things do well deserve our serious regard, affection, or care, and that it is blameable to be solicitous about them; that naked goodness (how low, weak, and poor soever) is to be chosen before all the specious pomps and glories of this world; that the secret testimony of conscience is to be preferred before all the approbation and applause of men; that the hope of future joy should oversway the desire of present most certain and sensible delights; that the loss of all things may sometime be deemed our greatest gain, being contemned our highest honour, enduring afflictions our most desirable condition, death our surest welfare, a cross preferable to a crown; that accordingly it is often advantageous and expedient for us, and a duty incumbent on us, willingly to discard our dearest contents of life, to sacrifice our most valued interest, to forsake our nearest relations, to refuse what we most affect, to

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undertake what we most distaste, to undergo without reluctancy or regret the most bitter accidents that can befall us; that we must (to use the holy style) *hate our own souls, deny ourselves, and take up our cross, quit houses and lands, desert kindred and friends;* ἀποτάσσεσθαι πᾶσι τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ ὑπάρχουσι *to renounce,* or bid farewell to, *all that he hath,* or owneth, *cut off our right hands, and pluck out our right eyes; circumcise our hearts, mortify our members; crucify our flesh, with its affections and lusts; be crucified to the world;* to *account all* worldly *things damage,* dross, and *dung,* in comparison to spiritual goods: that we must so far remit and restrain our self-love, as to love all men, not excluding our greatest enemies, as ourselves: so as not only to part freely with our particular accommodations, but upon occasion, in imitation of our Saviour, to *lay down our lives for them;* so as not only to comport with their infirmities, but to requite their extremest injuries with good-will and good turns; so as to do good to all men, to return no evil to any; *to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us.*

John xii. 25. Luke ix. 23. xiv. 26. 33. Matt. xvi. 24. v. 29. Col. iii. 5. Gal. v. 24. vi. 14. Rom. vi. 6. Phil. iii. 7, 8. Matt. v. 44.

John vi. 60. These and such like dictates of the Spirit are hard and harsh sayings, absurd to our natural conceit, and abominable to our carnal humour; we cannot readily swallow them, we cannot easily digest them; in respect to them we as mere men are ἐχθροὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, *enemies in our mind,* or reason; our discourse presently doth contradict and oppose them; our reason is shut up, and barred with various appetites, humours, and passions against such truths; nor can we admit them into our hearts, except God

Col. i. 21.

by his Spirit do *set open our mind*, and work a free passage for them into us; it is *he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness*, who must, as St. Paul speaketh, *illustrate our hearts with the knowledge* of these things: an *unction from the holy One*, clearing our eyes, softening our hearts, healing our distempered faculties, must, as St. John informeth us, *teach* and persuade us this sort of truths: a hearty faith of these seemingly incredible propositions must indeed be, as St. Paul calleth it, *the gift of God*, proceeding from that *Spirit of faith*, whereof the same apostle speaketh; such faith is not, as St. Basil saith, *engendered by geometrical necessities, but by the effectual operations of the Holy Ghost*[i]: *Flesh and blood will not reveal unto us, nor can any man* with clear confidence *say, that Jesus* (the author, master, and exemplifier of these doctrines) *is the Lord* (the Messias, the infallible Prophet, the universal Lawgiver, the Son of the living God,) *but by the Holy Ghost: Every spirit, which* sincerely *confesseth him to be the Christ*, who hath enjoined these precepts, we may with St. John safely conclude to *be of God*; for of ourselves *we are not sufficient*, as the apostle saith, λογίζεσθαί τι, *to reason out*, or collect, any of these things; we never of our own accord, without divine attraction, should *come unto Christ*, that is, should effectually consent unto and embrace his institution, consisting of such unplausible propositions and precepts: hardly would his own disciples, who had so long enjoyed the light of his instruction and conversation, have admitted it, if he had not granted to

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Διανοίγειν τὸν νοῦν. Luke xxiv. 45. 2 Cor. iv. 6. Acts xvi. 14. 1 John ii. 27. Eph. ii. 8. Phil. i. 29. 1 Cor. xii. 9. Πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως. 2 Cor. iv. 13. Matt. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. xii. 3. 1 John iv. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 5. John vi. 44.

[i] Πίστις οὐκ ἐν γεωμετρικαῖς ἀνάγκαις, ἀλλ' ἡ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ἐνεργείαις ἐγγινομένη. Bas. in Ps. cxv.

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them that *Spirit of truth*, whose work it was ὁδηγεῖν, to lead them in this unknown and uncouth way, ἀναγγέλλειν, to tell them again and again, that is, to instil and inculcate these crabbed truths upon them, ὑπομιμνήσκειν, to admonish, excite, and urge them to the marking and minding them; hardly, I say, without the guidance of the Spirit, would our Lord's disciples have admitted divers evangelical truths, as our Lord himself told them; *I have*, said he, *many things beside to say to you, but ye cannot as yet bear them: but when he, the Spirit of truth, shall come, he shall conduct you into all truth.*

John xvi. 13.

John xiv. 26.

John xvi. 12, 13.

As for the mighty sages of the world, the learned scribes, the subtle disputers, the deep politicians, the *wise men according to the flesh*, the men of most refined judgment, and improved reason in the world's eye, they were more ready to deride, than to regard, to impugn, than to admit these doctrines: to the *Greeks who sought wisdom*, the preaching of them did seem *foolishness*.

1 Cor. i. 20, &c.

It is true, some few sparks or flashes of this divine knowledge may possibly be driven out by rational consideration; philosophy may yield some twilight glimmerings thereof; common reason may dictate a faint consent unto, may produce a cold tendency after some of these things: but a clear perception, and a resolute persuasion of mind, that *full assurance of faith*[k], and *inflexible confession of hope*[l], which the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh of; that *all riches of the full assurance of understanding*, that *abundant knowledge of the divine*

[k] Πληροφορία τῆς πίστεως. Heb. x. 22.

[l] Ὁμολογία τῆς ἐλπίδος ἀκλινής. Heb. x. 23.

will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding[m], with which St. Paul did pray that his Colossians might *be replenished*; these so perfect illustrations of the mind, so powerful convictions of the heart, do argue immediate influences from the fountain of life and wisdom, the divine Spirit. No external instruction could infuse, no interior discourse could excite them, could penetrate those opacities of ignorance, and dissipate those thick mists of prejudice, wherein nature and custom do involve us; could so thoroughly awaken the lethargic stupidity of our souls; could supple the refractory stiffness of our wills, could mollify the stony hardness of our hearts, could void our natural aversation to such things, and quell that φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *that carnal mind*, the which, St. Paul saith, *is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*; could depress those ὑψώματα, those *lofty towers* of self-conceit, *reared against the knowledge of God*, and *demolish* those ὀχυρώματα, those bulwarks of self-will and perverse stomach opposed against the impressions of divine truth; and *captivate* πᾶν νόημα, *every conceit* and device of ours *to the obedience of Christ* and his discipline. Well therefore did St. Paul pray in behalf of his Ephesians, that *God would bestow on them that spirit of wisdom and revelation in the acknowledgment of him, and that the eyes of their mind* (or reason) *might be enlightened, so as to know the hope of their calling*; that is, to understand and believe the doctrines of Christianity, which upon condition of obedience did promise felicity to them.

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Col. i. 9.

Rom. viii. 7.

2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

Eph. i. 17, 18. Τῆς διανοίας.

So is the light of spiritual knowledge, together

[m] Πᾶς πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως. Col. ii. 2.

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with a temper of mind, disposing to receive it, communicated to us; but further also by the same divine power and spirit are our vital heat and vigour, our active strength and courage imparted. For as mere men, we are not only blind to discern, dull to conceive, backward to undertake the necessary duties of virtue and piety; but we are also dead, heartless, and unwieldy, lame and impotent, indisposed and uncapable to perform them: though we should competently apprehend our duty, and our spirit thence should be *willing;* yet *our flesh*, or natural power, *is weak:* we may, as St. Paul instructeth us, in our judgment consent that *the Law is holy, just, and good;* and consequently *to will may be present to us;* that is, we may be desirous, and in some measure resolved to obey it; yea, we may *have some interior rational complacence therein;* and yet not have ability to act according to these dictates and desires; for *to will is present with me*, (saith he in the person of a man endued only with natural strength, abstracting from the subsidiary virtue and operation of the divine Spirit,) *but to perform that which is good, I find not;* I perceive not any means or way of effecting it: knowledge therefore, and willingness to do good, doth not suffice; we need a prevalent force to stir and raise this unwieldy bulk, to overpoise our natural propensions, to subdue the reluctancies, and check the importunities of sense, to correct bad nature, and reclaim from bad custom: the natural might and policy of our single reason, being very feeble and shallow, is not fitly matched to encounter that potent confederacy of enemies, which continually with open violence doth invade and assail us; or which by clandestine wiles doth

Matt. xxvi. 41.

Rom. vii. 12, 16. Σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός.

Rom. vii. 22. Συνήδομαι τῷ νόμῳ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον.

Rom. vii. 18. Τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν, οὐχ εὑρίσκω.

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itch to circumvent and supplant us. Is it easy us not to dread the frowns, nor to be charmed the flatteries; to slight both the hatred and fa-ur; to abide the persecutions, and to avoid the urements of this world; this wicked, violent, de-tful world, which is ever ready to deter from od, and entice us to evil? Is it easy to restrain d repress those *fleshly lusts, which,* as St. Peter th, *do war against our souls,* combating them th their own forces, using their own faculties and mbers as weapons against them? Is it easy to cue ourselves from that *other law in our mem-rs, that warreth against the law of our under-nding, and captivateth us to the law of sin?* Is a small matter to set upon, to grapple with, to ock down that gigantic Philistine, inordinate self-e, (the root of injustice, pride, envy, malice, am-ion, and avarice within us,) which naturally is so l and stout; which, if not checked in its progress, ll daily grow in stature and strength? Is it a ght business to detect, to counterplot, to decline defeat those μεθοδείαι, those *devices,* or *subtile tins,* and sleights of the tempter; *to wrestle with incipalities, with powers, with the rulers of this rksome world, with the spiritualities of wicked-ss* surrounding us? May we not reasonably in nparison to these mighty Anakim be (as the chil-en of Israel anciently were) *in our own sight as asshoppers,* quite despairing by our own strength vanquish, to resist them?

1 Pet. ii. 11. Jam. iv. 1.

Rom. vii. 25.

Eph. vi. 11. Ἡμῖν ἡ πάλη.

Eph. vi. 12.

Num. xiii. 33.

In our spiritual conflict with such dangerous and eadful adversaries, we do need an ἐπιχορηγία τοῦ πνεύματος, as St. Paul speaketh, that is, *a large sup-y of the Spirit,* a collation of auxiliary forces, an

Phil. i. 19.

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habitual support derived from that invincible and infallible Spirit, which only is stronger and wiser than they; we need to be armed with that δύναμις ἐξ ὕψους, that *power from on high*, or heavenly might, whereby the apostles were enabled to fight their noble battles, and to achieve their glorious conquests, subduing the rebellious world, and baffling the powers of darkness; we need δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι, *to be strengthened with might by Christ's Spirit in the inward man*, as St. Paul expresseth it; whereby, as he, we may πάντα ἰσχύειν, be *able to do all things*, or to accomplish the most difficult parts of our duty; without which *we can do nothing*, that is, cannot discharge the most easy things required of us; *all our sufficiency is of God*; it is he, who *out of his goodness doth effect in us both to will and to perform*; his Spirit *taking part with our infirmities*, and thereby giving us advantage over all opposition and difficulty. The chief reason why we *do not sin*, or persist in a course of disobedience to the laws of God, is, as St. John telleth us, *because the divine seed abideth in us*, that root of divine life, and vital activity implanted in us by the Holy Spirit; that *divine nature*, (as St. Peter styleth it,) that principle and spring of spiritual motion by him inserted in us; from which only seed or nature do sprout all heavenly graces and virtues [n].

Luke xxiv. 49. (Is. lix. 19.)

Eph. iii. 16. Col. i. 11.

Phil. iv. 13.

John xv. 5.

2 Cor. iii. 5. Phil. ii. 13.

Τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνεται ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν—

Rom. viii. 26.

1 John iii. 9.

1 Pet. i. 23. 2 Pet. i. 4.

Θεία φύσις. Vis divinæ gratiæ, potentior utique natura. *Tertull.*

The principal and original virtue, charity, (*the root, the fountain, the mother of all goodness*, as St. Chrysostom calleth it [o],) even that *is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us*, as

Rom. v. 5.

[n] Οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἁμαρτημάτων ἀπαλλαγῆναι ἄνευ τῆς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐνεργείας. Chrys.

[o] Ῥίζα, καὶ πηγὴ, καὶ μήτηρ ἁπάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν. Chrys.

St. Paul telleth us; and the *fruit*, saith he, *of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth*; and, *love, peace, longsuffering, benignity, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*, are by the same divine apostle reckoned streams from the same source, fruits of the same rich and goodly stock: to it generally are attributed all purification of our hearts, mortification of our lusts, sanctification of our lives, and consequently salvation of our souls: *Ye*, saith St. Paul, *are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*; and, *God hath chosen us from the beginning to salvation by sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*; and, *Having*, saith St. Peter, *purified our souls in obedience to the truth, by the Spirit, unto charity unfeigned*; and, *If*, saith St. Paul again, *by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live*; thus doth our spiritual being and state, together with our life and active powers, depend upon the Holy Spirit: and not only so; but, SERM. LXXVII. Eph. v. 9. Gal. v. 22. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 2 Thess. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 22. Rom. viii. 13.

3. The continued subsistence and preservation, the actual use and exercise of them, all our discreet conduct, all our good practice do rely upon him: it is true of our spiritual, no less than of our natural life. *If he doth avert his face, we are troubled; if he doth subtract his influence, we die, and return unto our dust*: upon all occasions we do need his direction, aid, and comfort; for *the way of man*, as the prophet saith, *is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps: It is the Lord*, as the Psalmist saith, *that ordereth the steps of a good man, and upholdeth him with his hand.* We have all need to pray with that good man; Ps. civ. 29. Jer. x. 23. Ps. xxxvii. 23.

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Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness.

Psal. cxliii. 8, 10.

We are vain and uncertain in our opinions, fickle and irresolute in our purposes, slow and heavy in our proceedings; apt to faint and falter, to stumble and slip in all our practice; we do need therefore this sure oracle to consult in our doubts and darknesses; this faithful friend to direct and advise us in our affairs; this constant monitor to rouse and quicken us in our undertakings; this powerful guardian to support and establish us in our ways: it is, in respect to good men, this steady hand that holdeth the helm, and gently steereth their course through the blind tracks of religious practice; withdrawing them from those dangerous shelves of error and temptation, upon which they are apt to split; it is this heavenly gale, that filleth their sails with constant resolution, and fairly driveth them forward in their voyage toward eternal bliss. He softly doth whisper and insinuate good thoughts into us; doth kindle pious desires, doth cherish virtuous intentions, doth promote honest endeavours; he seasonably checketh and restraineth us from sin; he faithfully reproveth and upbraideth us for committing it; he raiseth wholesome remorse, shame, and displeasure for our unworthiness and folly; he sweetly warmeth our cold affections, inflaming our hearts with devotion toward God; he qualifieth us, and encourageth us to approach the throne of grace, breeding in us faith and humble confidence, prompting us fit matter of request, becoming our advocate and intercessor for the good success of our prayers;

through Christ Jesus, saith St. Paul, *we have access by one Spirit unto the Father;* and, *the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should ask for as we ought; but the Spirit itself intercedeth for us.* SERM. LXXVII. Eph. ii. 18. Rom. viii. 26.

He guardeth us, he standeth by us, he sustaineth us in all trials and temptations, affording *grace sufficient* to escape or to endure them; *not suffering us to be tempted above what we are able.* 2 Cor. xii. 9. 1 Cor. x. 13.

He supporteth and comforteth us in our afflictions and distresses of all kinds, of our inward and outward estate; this David knew when in his penitential agonies he prayed, *Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit:* this those first Christians felt, who, under persecutions and all outward discouragements, were yet *filled with joy,* and *did walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost;* whence that testimony of St. Paul concerning the Thessalonians; *Ye were followers of me, and of the Lord, receiving the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:* by it the blessed saints, martyrs, and confessors being inspired, did not only with admirable patience, but incredible alacrity, undergo the extremest losses, ignominies, and tortures, which the spite of hell and rage of the world could inflict on them. Ps. li. 11, 12. Acts xiii. 52. ix. 31, &c. 1 Thess. i. 6.

It is, in fine, this Holy Spirit which is the sole author and spring of all true delight, of all real content within us; of that *unspeakable joy in believing,* that *gayety of hope,* that satisfaction in well doing: the partaking of his society, influence, and consolation, is indeed the most delicious repast and richest 1 Pet. i. 8. Rom. xv. 13. Heb. iii. 6.

SERM. LXXVII.

cordial of our soul; the nearest resemblance, the sweetest foretaste of paradise.

So many, so great; yea far more, far greater than, should the time give me leave, I could enumerate or express, are the benefits accruing to us from this most excellent gift of God, by him graciously conferred upon all good Christians; for which we should correspondently endeavour with all our hearts to praise and thank him; in all our lives to make grateful and worthy returns for it; especially by well using it to the greatest purposes, for which it was bestowed, of enabling us to serve God, of preserving us from sin, of conducting us to eternal salvation.

Let us earnestly invite this holy guest unto us, by our prayers unto him, who hath promised to bestow his Spirit upon those which ask it, to impart *this living stream* to every one which *thirsteth* after it; let us willingly receive him into our hearts, let us treat him with all kind usage, with all humble observance. Let us not exclude him by supine neglect or rude *resistance;* let us not *grieve* him by our perverse and froward behaviour toward him; let us not *tempt him* by our fond presumptions or base treacheries; let us not *quench* his heavenly light and heat by our foul lusts and passions: but let us admit gladly his gentle illapses; let us hearken to his faithful suggestions; let us comply with his kindly motions; let us demean ourselves modestly, consistently, and officiously toward him: that we may so do, God of his infinite mercy grant unto us, through *Jesus Christ our Lord;* to whom, with the same *Holy Spirit,* for ever be all glory and praise. Amen.

Luke xi. 13. John vii. 37, 38, 39.

Acts vii. 51. Eph. iv. 30. Isa. lxiii. 10. Acts v. 9. 1 Thess. v. 19.

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O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and because, through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy commandments we may please thee both in will and deed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A

DEFENCE

OF THE

BLESSED TRINITY.

TRINITY SUNDAY, 1663.

Φύσει μὲν ἅπας λόγος σαθρὸς καὶ εὐκίνητος, καὶ διὰ τὸν ἀντιμαχόμενον λόγον ἐλευθερίαν οὐκ ἔχων· ὁ δὲ περὶ Θεοῦ τοσούτῳ μᾶλλον, ὅσῳ μεῖζον τὸ ὑποκείμενον, καὶ ὁ ζῆλος πλείων, καὶ ὁ κίνδυνος χαλεπώτερος· καὶ γὰρ νοῆσαι χαλεπὸν, καὶ ἑρμηνεῦσαι ἀμήχανον, καὶ ἀκοῆς κεκαθαρμένης ἐπιτυχεῖν ἐργωδέστερον. Greg. Naz. Orat. 26.

Coloss. iii. 2.

Φρονῖτε τὰ ἄνω.

Set your affections on things above.

FOR understanding this apostolical precept, two particulars must be considered; first the act, φρονεῖν, (which is rendered to *set our affections*;) then the object, τὰ ἄνω, *things above:* these we briefly shall explain.

The word φρονεῖν doth primarily, and also according to common use, denote an advertency, or intent application of the mind upon any object: of the mind, that is, of a man's soul, especially of its rational part; so as to include the powers of understanding, will, affection, activity; whence it may imply direction of our understanding to know; of our will to choose and embrace; of our affection to love, desire, relish; of our activity to pursue any good (real or apparent) which is proposed: accord-

ing to which most comprehensive sense (suiting the nature of the thing) I do take the word, supposing that St. Paul doth enjoin us to employ all our mental faculties in study, choice, passion, endeavour upon supernal things.

The τὰ ἄνω (things above) may be so taken, as to import all things relating to our spiritual life here, or our future state hereafter; the which do either actually subsist above in heaven, or have a final reference thither: so they may comprise, 1. The substantial beings, to whom we stand related, owe respect, perform duty. 2. The state and condition of our spiritual life here, or hereafter, as we are servants and subjects of God, citizens of heaven, candidates of immortal happiness. 3. Rules to be observed, qualities to be acquired, actions to be performed, means to be used by us in regard to the superior place and state.

Of these things the incomparably principal and supreme, the τὸ ὑπεράνω, is the ever most glorious and blessed Trinity; to the minding of which this day is peculiarly dedicated, and the which indeed is always the most excellent, most beneficial, most comfortable object of our contemplation and affection; wherefore upon it I shall now immediately fix my discourse.

The sacred Trinity may be considered, either as it is in itself wrapt up in unexplicable folds of mystery; or as it hath discovered itself operating in wonderful methods of grace towards us.

As it is in itself, it is an object too bright and dazzling for our weak eye to fasten upon, an abyss too deep for our short reason to fathom: I can only say, that we are so bound to mind it, as to exercise

our faith, and express our humility, in willingly believing, in submissively adoring those high mysteries (which are revealed in the holy oracles) concerning it, by that Spirit itself, *which searcheth the depths of God*, and by that only Son of God, who residing in his Father's bosom, hath thence brought them forth, and *expounded them* to us, so far as was fit for our capacity and use: and the lectures so read by the eternal *wisdom of God*, the propositions uttered by the mouth of *truth itself*, we are obliged with a docile ear, and a credulous heart, to entertain.

'Εξῆνε ἐξηγήσατο. John i. 18.

That there is one Divine Nature or Essence, common unto three Persons incomprehensibly united, and ineffably distinguished; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations; all equally infinite in every divine perfection, each different from other in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual inexistence of one in all, and all in one; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant; an eternal generation, and an eternal procession, without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependence; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence: these are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving how they agree, but should not stagger our faith in assenting that they are true; upon which we should meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with disposition to admire, veiling our faces in the presence, and prostrating our reason at the feet of wisdom so far transcending us.

John x. 38. xiv. 10. xvii. 21.

There be those, who, because they cannot untie, dare to cut in sunder these sacred knots; who, be-

cause they cannot fully conceive it, dare flatly to deny them; who, instead of confessing their own infirmity, do charge the plain doctrines and assertions of holy scripture with impossibility. Others seem to think they can demonstrate these mysteries by arguments grounded upon principles of natural light; and express it by similitudes derived from common experience. To repress the presumption of the former, and to restrain the curiosity of the latter, the following considerations (improved by your thoughts) may perhaps somewhat conduce.

1. We may consider, that our reason is no competent or capable judge concerning propositions of this nature; [a] *Our breast,* as Minutius speaketh, *is a narrow vessel, that will not hold much understanding;* it is not sufficient, nor was ever designed to sound such depths, to descry the radical principles of all being, to reach the extreme possibilities of things. Such an intellectual capacity is vouchsafed to us as doth suit to our degree, (the lowest rank of intelligent creatures,) as becometh our station in this inferior part of the world, as may qualify us to discharge the petty businesses committed to our management, and the facile duties incumbent on us: but to know what God is[b], how he subsisteth, what he can, what he should do, by our natural perspicacity, or by any means we can use, further than he pleaseth to reveal, doth not suit to the meanness of our condition, or the narrowness of our capacity; these really are the most elevated sublimities, and the abstrusest subtilties that are, or can be, in the nature

[a] Nobis ad intellectum pectus angustum est, &c. *Min. Felix.*

[b] Τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιητὴν, καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον, καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς πάντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν. Plato in Tim.

of things: he that can penetrate them, may erect his tribunal any where in the world, and pretend justly that nothing in heaven or earth is exempted from his judgment. But in truth, how unfit our reason is to exercise such universal jurisdiction, we may discern by comparing it to our sense; it is obvious that many beasts do (by advantage of a finer sense) see, hear, smell things imperceptible to us: and were it not very unreasonable to conclude that such things do not exist, or are in themselves altogether insensible, because they do not at all appear to us? Is it not evident, that we ought to impute their imperceptibility (respecting us) to the defect of our sense, to its dullness and grossness, in regard to the subtilty of those objects? Even so may propositions in themselves, and in regard to the capacity of higher understandings, (for there are gradual differences in understanding, as well as in sense,) be true and very intelligible, which to our inferior reason seem unintelligible, or repugnant to the prenotions with which our soul is imbued; and our not discerning those truths may argue the blindness and weakness of our understanding, not any fault or inconsistency in the things themselves; nor should it cause us anywise to distrust them, if they come recommended to our belief by competent authority.

To such purposes indeed the holy scripture frequently doth vilify our reason and knowledge:

Jer. x. 14. *Every man*, saith Jeremiah, *is brutish in know-*
Psal. ciii. 14. *ledge. The Lord*, saith the Psalmist, *knoweth the*
1 Cor. iii. 20. *thoughts of men, (of wise men*, as St. Paul quoteth
Job xi. 12. it,) *that they are vanity. Vain man*, saith he in Job, *would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt;* that is, however we affect to seem wise,

yet to be dull as an ass, to be wild as a colt, is natural to us. *My thoughts,* saith God in the prophet, Isa. lv. 8, 9. *are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* God's wisdom is as the heavens, the highest and top of all wisdom; man's as the earth, beneath which there is no degree, but that of hell and darkness: we therefore in this respect are unfit to determine concerning things so exceedingly sublime and subtile.

2. We may consider, that not only the imperfection of our reason itself, but the manner of using it, doth incapacitate us to judge about these matters. Had we competent skill to sail in this deep ocean, yet we do want a gale to drive us, and a compass to steer our course by therein; we have not any firm grounds to build our judgment on, or certain rules to square it by. We cannot effectually discourse or determine upon any subject, without having principles homogeneous and pertinent thereto (that are ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ συγγενείᾳ, cognate and congruous to the subject-matter, as the philosopher speaketh) upon which to found our argumentation. Now all the principles we can have are either originally innate to our minds, or afterward immediately infused by God, or by external instruction from him disclosed to us; or acquired by our experience, and observation of things incurring our sense; or framed by our reason, comparing those means; of which the three former sorts are most arbitrarily communicated, and both for number and kind depend upon the free pleasure of him, who distributeth them according *to a measure* suitable to each man's occasions, estimated by

Annal. i. 7.

Ὡς ἑκάστῳ θεὸς ἐμέρισε μέτρον. Rom. xii. 3.

himself. How many those are, and how far they may qualify us to judge or discourse about those transcendent matters, is hard to define; but most certainly they never can clash with one another; no light in any manner imparted by God can obscure the doctrine declared by him, no doctrine can thwart principles instilled by him. The latter sorts appertain only to material and sensible objects; which therefore can only enable us to deduce, or to examine conclusions relating to them; and being applied to things of another kind, are abused, so as to become apt to produce great mistakes: as, for instance, most ancient philosophers observing that the changes and vicissitudes in nature were generally by the same matters undergoing several alterations, or putting on different shapes; and that bodies once being in rest did usually consist in that state, until by impulse of other bodies they were put into motion; did thence frame such axioms, or principles of discourse, *Ex nihilo nihil fit;* and *Quicquid movetur, ab alio movetur:* which propositions supposing them true in relation to the present conditions and powers of sensible things, yet were it unlawful to stretch them unto beings of another kind and nature, (to beings immaterial and insensible,) or to infer thence generally, that in the utmost possibility of things there is not any creative or any self-motive power: even as from the like premises it would be vain to conclude, that there be no other beings subsistent beside those which strike our senses, or discover themselves by sensible effects. [c]In like man-

[c] Id quod Deus est, secundum id quod est nec humano sermone edici, nec humanis auribus percipi, nec humanis sensibus colligi potest. *Novat. de Trin.* cap. 7.

ner, it cannot be reasonable out of principles drawn from ordinary experience, about these most low and imperfect things, to collect, that there can be no other kind of unions, of distinctions, of generations, of processions, than such as our own gross sense doth represent to us: reason itself more forcibly doth oblige us to think that to sublimer beings there do pertain modes of existence and action, unions and distinctions, influences and emanations of a more high and perfect kind, such as our coarse apprehension cannot adequate, nor our rude language express; which we, perhaps, have no faculty subtile enough to conceive distinctly, nor can attain any congruous principles, from which to discourse solidly about them[d]. To judge of these things, if we will not, against the philosopher's rule, μεταβαίνειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος, *shift kinds*, or use improper and impertinent arguments, we must *compare spiritual things with spiritual*[e], so as to draw conclusions about spirituals only from principles revealed by God's Spirit, the sole master of spiritual science; so also as to express them not ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις, *in terms devised by human wisdom*, but in such as the Holy Spirit hath suggested; for ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος, a man endowed merely with common sense (or natural reason) cannot δέχεσθαι, *apprehend*, or perceive

Ὠνομάσαμεν γὰρ, ὡς ἡμῖν ἐφικτὸν, ἐκ τῶν ἡμετέρων τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ. Naz. Or. 37. de Sp. S.

[d] Cum quæritur quid tres, magna inopia humanum laborat eloquium; dictum est tamen tres Personæ, non ut illud diceretur, sed ne taceretur. *Aug. de Trin.* 5. 9.

Κύριον ὄνομα τῶν νοητῶν καὶ ἀσωμάτων οὐδέν. Naz. Orat. 45. (ad Evagr.)

[e] Πνευματικὰ πνευματικοῖς συγκρίνειν. 1 Cor. ii. 13.

those *things of God, which only the Spirit of God doth know.* To improve and press which consideration further,

3. We may consider the weakness and shortness of our reason, even about things most familiar and easy to us; the little or nothing we by our utmost diligence can attain to know, concerning their intrinsic essences, their properties, their causes and manners of production. What do we more commonly hear, than earnest complaints from the most industrious searchers of natural knowledge concerning the great obscurity of nature, the difficulty of finding truth, the blindness of our mind, and impotency of our reason? And should they be silent, yet experience plainly would speak how difficult, if not impossible, it is to arrive unto any clear and sure knowledge of these common objects; seeing the most sedulous inquiries, undertaken by the choicest wits for above two thousand years, have scarce perhaps exhibited one unquestionable theorem in natural philosophy, one unexceptionable maxim of ethical prudence or policy; all things being still exposed to doubt and dispute, as they were of old, when first admiration and curiosity did prompt men to hunt after the causes of things: the most however that, after all our care and toil, we can perceive, doth not exceed some faint colours, some superficial figures, some gross effects of things, while their radical properties and their immediate causes remain enveloped and debarred from our sight in unaccessible darkness. Shall we then, who cannot pierce into the nature of a pebble, that cannot apprehend how a mushroom doth grow, that are baffled in our philosophy about a gnat, or a worm, debate and decide

Κινούσθω σου τὸ φιλότιμον ἐν ἀκινδύνοις. Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

(beyond what is taught us from above) concerning the precise manner of divine essence, subsistence, or generation? [f] *I do,* saith St. Chrysostom, *eat meats; but how they are divided into phlegm, into blood, into juice, into choler, I am ignorant; these things, which every day we see and taste, we do not know; and are we curious about the essence of God?* We are (as Aristotle himself, no dunce, no idiot, doth confess) but *owl-eyed,* πρὸς τὰ τῇ φύσει φανερώτατα πάντων, *in regard to things naturally most evident,* and palpable; and can we be such Lynceus's, as to see through the furthest recesses of infinity? *Hardly,* saith the Wisdom of Solomon, *do we guess aright of things upon the earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us; but the things that are in heaven, who hath searched out?* Yea, and the genuine Solomon himself, *I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me: that which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?* What is more remote, what more profound, than God's nature? who then can find it out? Sooner with our hands may we touch the extreme surface of the skies, sooner with our eyes may we pierce to the centre of the earth: so it is expressly told to us in Job; *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?*

Arist. Met. ii. 1.

Wis. ix. 13.

Eccles. vii. 23, 24.

Job xi. 7, 8.

4. It may be considered, that we daily see and

[f] Βρώματα ἐσθίω, τὸ δὲ πῶς μερίζονται εἰς φλέγμα, εἰς αἷμα, εἰς χυμὸν, εἰς χολὴν, ἀγνοῶ· ταῦτα ἅπερ βλέπομεν καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν ἐσθίοντες ἀγνοοῦμεν, καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ πολυπραγμονοῦμεν; Chrys. Περὶ ἀκαταλήπτου. α'.

observe things, which, did not manifest experience convince us of their being, we should be apt to disbelieve their possibility; sense no less than faith doth present us with objects, to bare reason improbable and unconceivable; so that should we attend to the scruples injected thereby, we should hardly take things for possible which we behold existent; we should distrust the greatest evidence of sense, and by our logic put out our eyes. Who would believe, that, did he not every day see it; who can conceive how, although he seeth it, from a little dry, ill-favoured, insipid seed thrown into the earth, there shortly would rise so goodly a plant, endued with so exact figure, so fragrant smell, so delicate taste, so lively colour; by what engines it attracteth, by what discretion it culleth out, by what hands it mouldeth its proper aliment; by what artifice it doth elaborate the same so curiously, and incorporate it with itself? What virtue could we imagine in nature able to digest an earthy juice into the pellucid clearness of crystal, into the invincible firmness of a diamond? Who would not be an infidel, did not his sight assure him of the miracles achieved by that blind plastic force, which without eye or hand doth frame such varieties of exquisite workmanship, inimitable, and far surpassing the skill of the greatest artist? That a little star, from so vast a distance, in a moment, should make impression on our eyes, replenishing with its light or image so spacious a region all about it, were we blind we should hardly believe, we scarce could fancy: how, without knowing the organs of speech, or the manner of applying them, without any care or pain employed by us, we so conform our voice, as to express what word, what

accent we please; how we do this, or that we can do it, as it will confound our thought to imagine, so it would stagger our faith to believe, did not our conscience persuade us that we can and do speak. It is upon occasion very commonly said, I should never have believed it, had I not seen it; and that men speak so in earnest, many such instances declare. Now if we can give credit to our sense against the suffrage or scruple of our reason in things not so discosted from our capacity of knowledge, shall we not much more yield our belief unto God's express word in things so infinitely distant from it? If common experience can subdue our judgments, and compel us to a belief of things incredible, shall our reason demur at submitting to divine authority? If the dictate of our conscience doth convince us, shall not we much more surrender to the testimony of God, who *is greater than our conscience, and knoweth all things?* If we do believe, because we seem to know by seeing ourselves; we should rather believe, because we surely know by hearing from God: for sense may deceive us, and often needeth correction from reason; God cannot deceive, and reason often is by him corrected: which leadeth me to a further consideration, that, 1 John iii. 20.

5. The propositions clearly delivered unto us by God himself, are upon many accounts more unquestionably true, more credible than the experiments of any sense, or principles of any science: whence if there happen to arise any seeming contest between these, a precedence is due to the former in derogation to the latter; it is fit that we rather give our eyes and our ears, our fancies and our reasons the lie, than anywise, by diffidence to his word, put an

affront on God, (for to disbelieve him is, as St. John
1 John v. 10. telleth us, to give him the lie;) τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the*
1 Cor. i. 25. *folly of God* (as St. Paul speaketh; that is, the points of faith declared by God, which seem most irrational and cross to the decrees of human wisdom) *is* σοφώτερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων, *wiser than men;* that is, more assuredly consonant to real truth, than our most undoubted theorems of science, and most current maxims of policy. God is the *Father of all lights,* both of that which immediately shineth from heaven, and of that which glimmereth here below; he is the fountain of all truth, whether natural or supernatural: but his light and his truth he conveyeth into us by manners different; some light streameth directly from him, other cometh obliquely, being refracted through divers mediums, or reflected from several objects upon us; the first sort must needs be more bright, and more pure, should be more powerful and efficacious upon our minds: the latter is often blended with material tinctures, is weakened by the interruptions it meeteth with, loseth of its purity and its force by the many conduits it passeth through, by the many shades it mixeth with. Observations of sense do often prove fallacious; and their not ever doing so dependeth upon divers conditions, a right temper of the organ, a fit disposition of the medium, a just distance of the object; so that conclusions derived from them cannot be so absolutely certain, nor consequently the principles grounded on them. But divine revelation is not obnoxious to such conditions: as the doctrines revealed are in themselves simply true, according to the highest pitch of necessity, because supreme wisdom doth conceive them, and truth itself doth vent them; so

the manner of declaring them must be competent, because God himself doth choose and use it; there plainly needeth no more, than yielding an attentive ear, and skill in the language wherein they are expressed, to secure us from error and uncertainty about them; so that well might St. Austin say, that[f] *in other things our conjecture is exercised; but faith alone doth assure our mind.*

There have been those, you know, who have not only advanced doubts concerning propositions attested to by clearest sense, and inferred by strongest discourse; but have by their argute cavillations bid fair to shake the foundations of all human science: but I never heard of any, who believed a God to be, that did contest the infallible truth of his oracles: Socrates, we may be sure, (his excellent scholar assuring us,) who was so incredulous as to disclaim all pretence to wisdom or science, being author of the famous saying, *Hoc tantum scio;* yet greatly did rely upon divine significations and testimonies, so deemed by him, and such as he could come at; alleging, that he, who followeth the conduct of his own reason, instead of God's direction, chooseth a blind and ignorant guide, before one that best seeth and knoweth the way: [g] *He,* saith the historian, *despised all human conceits in respect of God's advice.* 'Απομν. α'.

He that formeth the eye, saith the Psalmist, *shall not he see? He that planteth the ear, shall not he hear? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not* Psal. xciv. 9, 10.

[f] Ad cætera exercemur per fortasse; at cum de rebus fidei agitur, ibi est certe sine forte. *Aug.*

[g] Αὐτὸς δὲ πάντ' ἀνθρώπινα ὑπερεώρα πρὸς τὴν παρὰ τῶν Θεῶν ξυμβουλίαν.

he know? He that endued us with all our knowing faculties, and presideth over us in the management of them, shall not he supereminently know all that we can? Must not they in reason continue subordinate to his direction? Should they not always discern and judge under correction by him, with an appeal and submission reserved to his better judgment?

I might adjoin, that the object and the end (as well as the author and the manner) of divine revelation doth argue it to surpass all reason, and all sense, in certainty and credibility; for sense and reason converse wholly, or chiefly, about objects material and mutable; revelation about immaterial and immutable things: they direct us in affairs concerning this transitory life; this leadeth us toward eternal felicity. To mistake about those objects, to miscarry in those affairs, is in itself of little, in comparison of no importance: but to judge rightly about these things, to tread safely in these paths, is of infinitely vast concernment; a smaller competency therefore of light and certainty might well suffice to the purposes of reason and sense; but to faith the greatest degree of assurance is worthily due, and seemeth requisite. But further,

6. Not only the consideration of this mystery, but of all the divine attributes, will in like manner extort from our feeble reason the question of Nicodemus, *How can these things be?* They will all of them equally puzzle our shallow imagination, and baffle our slender understanding: for who can imagine, or understand, how God's immensity doth consist with his perfect simplicity; or that without any parts he doth coexist to all possible extension of

John iii. 9.

matter; being all here, and wholly there, and immensely every where? Who can apprehend his indivisible eternity, or how all successions of time are ever present to him, and subject to his view; so that he is not older now than he was when the world began, nor younger than he will be after innumerable ages are past; so that he foreseeth the most contingent events, depending upon causes in their nature arbitrary and indeterminate? Who can fancy, how out of mere nothing, or out of extreme confusion and indisposedness, the world could be created, and framed into so goodly order, by a mere act of will, or by the bare speaking of a word? How without any distraction of thought he governeth affairs, attending to the infinite varieties of thoughts, words, and actions occurring here; and *ita curans universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos*, as St. Austin speaketh? How he is truly said to resolve and to reverse, to love and hate, to be pleased and grieved, all without any real change, or *shadow of alteration?* How he suffereth many things to happen, which extremely displease him, and which he can easily hinder; and doth not effect many things which are much desired by him, and very feasible to his power? Why to equal men he distributeth his gifts so unequally; affording to divers abundant means of becoming happy, leaving others destitute of them? What wit of man can reconcile his infinite benignity with his most severe decrees; or compose the seeming differences between his mercy and his justice? Many such perfections and dispensations of God we must steadfastly believe, because they are plainly taught in scripture; to distrust them being to renounce Christianity; to deny

Confess. iii. 11.

them being to rase up the very foundations of our religion: yet he that shall with his utmost attention of mind endeavour to conceive how they can be, or how they consist together, according to our ordinary notions of things, and the vulgar meaning of words, applied by us to these inferior matters, shall find himself gravelled with innumerable semblances of contradiction, plunged in depths inscrutable, involved in labyrinths inextricable.

What in practice the cross of Christ was, *a scandal to Jews,* (men dull, but obstinate, and invincibly possessed by vain prejudices,) and *folly to Greeks,* (men of wit and subtilty, but overweeningly conceited of them,) that in speculation may a great part of divine truths be, apt to stumble froward and arrogant men[k]; but as there, so here, *blessed are they who are not scandalized;* whom no fond scruple or haughty conceit can pervert from readily embracing all necessary verities; such are those we pointed at, which if without extreme folly and impiety we cannot reject, or be diffident of, although surmounting our conceit, and dazzling our reason; then upon the same account, with like facility, we must submit our faith to the doctrines concerning the blessed Trinity, standing upon the same authority.

7. Lastly we may consider and meditate upon the total incomprehensibility of God in all things belonging to him[l]; in his nature, his attributes, his de-

[k] Πλέον ἐστὶ τοῦ περὶ Μουσικῶν ἀμούσους, καὶ πολεμικῶν ἀστρατεύτους διαλέγεσθαι, τὸ τὰ θεῖα καὶ δαιμόνια πράγματα διασκοπεῖν ἀνθρώπους ὄντας, οἷον ἀτέχνους τεχνιτῶν διάνοιαν ἀπὸ δόξης καὶ διαιρέσεως κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς μετιόντας. Plut. de sera Num. Vind.

[l] Εἰ γὰρ αἱ οἰκονομιαὶ ἀκατάληπτοι, πολλῷ μᾶλλον αὐτός. Chrys. Ἀκατ. α'.

crees, his works and ways; which all are full of depth, mystery, and wonder. God *inhabiteth* φῶς ἀπρόσιτον, *a light inaccessible* to the dim and weak sight of mortal eyes; which *no man hath seen, nor can see: No man,* as he told his servant Moses, *can see his face* (the very exterior appearance of him) *and live:* he is *a consuming fire,* that will scorch and devour such as by rash inquiries approach too near him [m]; *the sight,* it is said, *of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire in the sight of the children of Israel.* Even those spiritual eagles, the quick and strong-sighted seraphims, are obliged to *cover their faces,* as not daring to look upon, nor able to sustain the fulgor of his immediate presence, the flashes of glory and majesty issuing from his throne: and the most illuminate secretaries of heaven, unto whom secrets were disclosed, into which *angels themselves were ambitious to pry,* were sometimes nonplused in contemplation of God's attributes and actions; being in their astonishment forced to cry out, Ὦ βάθος· *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* Even his methods of exterior providence are inscrutably mysterious; *his judgments are* ἀνεξερεύνητα, like inexhaustible mines, to the bottom whereof we cannot anywise dig by our inquiry; *his paths are* ἀνεξιχνίαστοι, so obscure as not to be traced by any footsteps of our discourse; *his gifts are* ἀνεκδιήγητοι, not to be interpreted, or expressed by our language. And if all concerning God be thus incomprehensible, why should any thing seem incredible? Why out of so many unconceivable mysteries do we choose

1 Tim. vi. 16.

Exod. xxxiii. 23.

Deut. iv. 24. Exod. xxiv. 17.

Isa. vi. 2.

1 Pet. i. 12.

Rom. xi. 33.

2 Cor. ix. 15.

[m] Scrutator majestatis opprimetur a gloria. *Aug.*

some, reprobate others[n]? Wherefore do we stretch our judgment beyond its limits to things so infinitely exceeding it[o]? Why do we suffer our reason to be pragmatical, unjustly invading the office not belonging thereto; *intruding into things which it hath not seen*, nor can comprehend; those *secret things which belong to the Lord our God*, and the comprehension whereof he hath reserved unto himself?

Col. ii. 18. Deut. xxix. 29.

These considerations may suffice in some manner to shew, that [p]St. Chrysostom had reason to exclaim so much against the madness, as he styleth it, of those who do πολυπραγμονεῖν τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *are busily curious in speculation about the essence of God*; daring, τοῖς οἰκείοις ὑποβάλλειν λογισμοῖς, *to subject divine mysteries to their own ratiocinations*: that St. Basil's advice was wholesome, μὴ περιεργάζεσθαι τὰ σιωπώμενα, *not to be meddlesome about things, about which holy scripture is silent*: that [q]another ancient writer did say no less truly than prettily, that in these matters *curiositas reum facit, non peritum*; we may easilier incur blame than attain skill by nice inquiry into them: that many of the Fathers do with great wisdom dislike and dissuade

[n] Τί πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀνίπτασαι πεζὸς ὤν; τί καὶ σὺ μετρεῖς τῇ χειρὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν σπιθάμῃ, καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν δρακί; Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

[o] Δίξῃ ἐστὶν ἀχώρητος, μεγέθει ἀκατάληπτος, ὕψει ἀπερινόητος, σοφίᾳ ἀσυμβίβαστος, ἀγαθωσύνῃ ἀμίμητος, καλοποιΐᾳ ἀνεκδιήγητος. Theoph. ad Autol.

[p] Μάνιαν γὰρ ἔγωγε εἶναι ἰσχάτην φημὶ φιλονεικεῖν εἰδέναι τί τὴν οὐσίαν ἐστὶν ὁ Θεός. Chrys. περὶ Ἀκαταλ. α'.

Cogitemus si valemus, si non valemus credamus. *Aug. Serm.* 5. *de Temp.*

Τίς ἡ τοιαύτη ὑμῶν φιλονεικία τῶν ἐφευρέστεων ὥστε ἀνθρωπίνῃ φρονήσει ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην νόησιν ὁρίζεσθαι. Athan. t. i. 625.

[q] Zeno Veronens

he searching τὸ πῶς[r], the manner of things being true, or possible, as a suspicious mark, or a dangerous motive of infidelity: that St. Paul's rules, φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, *to be wise so as withal to be sober*, and modest; and μὴ φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ ὁ γέγραπται, *not to conceit any thing without warrant of scripture*, are in this case most especially to be heeded: that, according to St. Peter's admonition, we should *as new-born babes* (unprepossessed with any notions or fancies of our own) *long for, and greedily suck in the sincere milk of the word*; not diluting it with baser liquors of human device: that where God doth interpose his definitive sentence, our reason hath nothing to do but to attend and submit; no right to vote, no license to debate the matter; its duty is to listen and approve whatever God speaketh, to read and subscribe to whatever he writeth; at least in any case it should be mute, or ready to follow Job, saying, *Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* In fine, the testimony of God, with a sufficient clearness represented to the capacity of an honest and docile mind, (void of all partial respects, and clear from all sorts of prejudice; loving truth, and forward to entertain it; abhorring to wrest or wrack things, to use any fraud or violence upon any principle, or ground of truth;) the testimony of God, I say, so revealed, whatever exception our shallow reason can thrust in, should absolutely convince our judgments, and constrain our faith. If the holy scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us, (that which also the uniform course of nature and the

Rom. xii. 3. 1 Cor. iv. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 2. Ἐπιποθῆτε. Job xl. 4.

[r] Σαφὴς ἔλεγχος ἀπιστίας τὸ πῶς περὶ Θεοῦ λέγειν. Expos. Fid. apud Just. M.

peaceable government of the world doth also speak,) that there is but one true God; if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the three Persons of the blessed Trinity the same august names, the same peculiar characters, the same divine attributes, (essential to the Deity,) the same superlatively admirable operations of creation and providence; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme honours, services, praises, and acknowledgments to be paid unto them all; this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our minds, to stop our mouths, to smother all doubt and dispute about this high and holy mystery. It was exceeding goodness in God, that he would condescend so far to instruct us, to disclose so noble a truth unto us, to enrich our minds with that τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως, that *most excellent knowledge of himself;* and it would be no small ingratitude and unworthiness in us anywise to suspect his word, or pervert his meaning; anywise to subject his venerable oracles to our rude canvasses and cavils. In fine, the proper employment of our mind about these mysteries, is not to search and speculate about them, to discourse flippantly and boldly about them; but with a pious credulity to embrace them, with all humble respect to adore them.

I have thus endeavoured in some measure to defend the outworks of the orthodox doctrine concerning the blessed Trinity: it was beside my intent to insist so long thereon; but the matter did ἐφέλκεσθαι, was so attractive, that I could not wave shewing my respect thereto.

I proceed now to that which I principally designed, the proposing briefly some practical considerations, apt to excite us to the exercising our understanding

and affections upon those wonderful dispensations of grace and mercy, vouchsafed to us by the holy Trinity, either conjunctly, or (as they κατ' οἰκονομίαν are expressed) separately.

We first should carefully study and duly be affected with that gracious consent, and, as it were, confederacy of the glorious Three in designing and prosecuting our good; their unanimous agreement in uttering those three mighty words of favour to mankind, *Faciamus, Redimamus, Salvemus;* Let us make man out of nothing, Let us recover him from sin and perdition, Let us crown him with joy and salvation; we should with grateful resentments observe them conspiring to employ their wisdom in contriving fit means and methods to exert their power in effectual accomplishment of what was requisite to the promoting of our welfare, the rescue of us from all misery, the advancing us to the highest degree of dignity, and instating us in the most perfect condition of happiness, of which our nature is capable; in prosecution of that gracious design, which their joint goodness had projected for us. More distinctly,

1. We should set our mind on God the Father, before the foundation of the world from all eternity, pleasing to forecast with himself the creation of us, and communication of his own image to us; endowing us with most excellent faculties of body and soul; subjecting the visible world to our use and governance; placing us in a state of great accommodation and delight; permitting us to fall, that he might raise us to a higher and better condition; resolving to send his own dear Son from his bosom, to procure and purchase the redemption of mankind; preparing

and disposing the world for the reception of so great a mercy, by a general testification of his patience and beneficence, (*giving showers and fruitful seasons,* and *filling the hearts of men with food and gladness,*) but more especially by prophetical promises, predictions, and prefigurations: also suffering the generality of mankind so *to proceed in its ways,* as might render it sensible of its error and unhappiness, of the need and benefit of a deliverance; then *in the fulness of time,* when *the creature did earnestly groan, and long for its recovery from vanity and slavery,* actually sending his only Son, and clothing him with human flesh, that conversing with us, he might discover to us his gracious intentions toward us, might confirm the truth thereof by miraculous works, might instruct us by his heavenly doctrine and holy life in our duty, and the terms of our salvation, then freely delivering him over unto death, and accepting his passion as a sacrifice expiating our sins, and meriting his favour toward us; then raising him as *the first fruits* from the dead, setting him at his right hand, investing him with authority to govern and save those who sincerely would believe in him, and faithfully obey him; also sending and bestowing his holy Spirit to dwell in them, to conduct, confirm, and comfort them in the ways of truth and righteousness. These, with manifold other intercurrent passages of gracious providence ascribed to God the Father, we should seriously mind, and so resent, as to be ravished with admiration of his mercy, to be inflamed with love of his goodness, to be possessed with gratitude toward him, to become thoroughly devoted to his service.

Acts xiv. 17.

Gal. iv. 4. Rom. viii. 22.

2. We should likewise mind the blessed Son of

God concurring with his Father in all his purposes of love and mercy toward us, *in making all things*, and *sustaining them by the word of his power;* but especially in his (toward the freeing us from the desperate miseries, corruptions, and slaveries, into which we were plunged) assuming human nature, leading therein a troublesome and toilsome life, for our benefit and instruction; undergoing a bitter and shameful death, for the atonement of our sins, and reconciliation of us to divine favour; purchasing great and precious promises, procuring high and glorious privileges for us; ascending into heaven to prepare us mansions of bliss; interceding for us with God, and pouring from above manifold blessings upon us; the astonishing miracles of goodness, of wisdom, of condescension and patience, displayed in the management of which undertakings for us, what heart can well conceive, what tongue can utter? What amazement should it produce in us, to consider the brightest efflux of Divine Glory eclipsing and shrouding itself under so dark a cloud of mortal frailty; the Most High stooping into the quality of so mean a creature; the First-born and Heir apparent of heaven descending from his throne of eternal majesty, and voluntarily degrading himself into the *form of a servant*, clad in rags, worn with labour and travel, exposed to contempt and disgrace; to reflect upon the great Creator and sovereign Lord of all the world, who reared the heavens, and founded the earth, who possesseth and upholdeth all things, needing himself a shelter, pinched with want, taking alms from his slaves, and paying tribute to his subjects; to contemplate the Son of God, willingly styling himself the *Son of man*, really subjecting

himself to the duties, the necessities, the infirmities of human nature; suffering the coarsest hardships, and extremest disasters thereof; all this upon freest choice, with full contentment, and perfect submission to so mean and so distasteful a condition!

We may observe with how admirable goodness he did vouchsafe to converse with a froward generation of men, to instruct a stupid and indocile sort of people, with all sorts of beneficence, to oblige an incredulous, insensible, and ingrateful crew; with how invincible a meekness and patience he *endured the contradiction of sinners*, the scornful reproaches, the wrongful calumnies, the spiteful and cruel usages of the envious and malicious world; being to the highest extremity despised, hated, maligned, and abused by those whom he had most highly honoured, most affectionately loved, and conferred the greatest favours upon. We may with astonishment contemplate that strange contest between divine patience and human wickedness, striving which of them should excel; when we do peruse and weigh those enigmatical passages, God accused by man of blasphemy, the eternal Wisdom aspersed with folly, Truth itself impleaded of imposture, essential Love made guilty of mischief, and supreme Goodness styled a malefactor; infinite Power beat down, and trampled upon by impotent malice; the Judge of all the world, the Fountain of all authority and right, arraigned, condemned, and executed for injustice; the *Desire of all nations* rejected by his own country and kindred; the Joy of paradise (whose lightsome countenance doth cheer heaven itself) almost overwhelmed with grief, uttering lamentable groans, tortured with grievous agonies; the very

heart of God bleeding, and the sole Author of life expiring.

We may further study Jesus, with a hearty compassion, and tears gushing from his inmost bowels, pitying not these his own sufferings, but for the vengeance for them due and decreed unto his persecutors: we should mark him excusing their fault, and praying for their pardon; dying willingly for their good, when he died violently by their hand; passionately desiring their salvation, when they maliciously procured his destruction.

We should mind all the actions of the Son of God, our Saviour, with the most wise grounds, endearing circumstances, and precious fruits of them; his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession; as containing instances of the greatest charity and humility possible shewed unto us, as arguments of the greatest love and gratitude due from us: mind them we should most seriously, so as to be heartily affected with them, so as to esteem worthily the transcendent honour done us by God assuming our nature, and exalting us to a conjunction with the divine nature; so as to be deeply sensible of our obligation to so immense a charity, that could do and suffer so much for us without any desert of ours, yea, notwithstanding our exceedingly bad deserts, our rebellions and enmities against him; so as to detest the heinousness of our sins, that needed so mighty an expiation, that caused so horrid a tragedy; so as not to neglect so great salvation so frankly offered, so dearly purchased for us; not to frustrate the designs of so unconceivable love and goodness, so as to obey readily so gracious a Master, to follow carefully so admirable an example; so as

in imitation of him, and for his sake, to be meek and humble in heart, and in deed, seeing he did so infinitely condescend and abase himself for us; to be patient and submissive to his will, who stooped so low, and suffered so much for us; so as to bear a general affection to mankind, grounded like his, not upon any particular interests, nor limited by any partial respects, but extended freely, in real desire and intention toward all; liberally to impart the good things we possess, and patiently to brook the crosses we meet with, and heartily to forgive the offences done to us; for that he freely did part with the greatest glories of eternity, with the highest dignities and the richest treasures of heaven, for our sake; when we were *enemies in our minds by wicked works, dead in trespasses and sins*, guilty of numberless grievous offences against him, by his blood redeeming us from wrath, reconciling us to the mercy and favour of God.

3. We should also meditate upon the blessed Spirit of God, with equal goodness conspiring, and cooperating with all the purposes, to all the effects of grace, which conduce to our everlasting happiness; more especially as the repairer of our decayed frames, the enlivener of our dead souls, the infuser of spiritual light into our dark minds, the kindler of spiritual warmth into our cold hearts; the raiser of spiritual appetite to righteousness, and the relish of goodness in our stupid senses; the imparter of spiritual strength and vigour to our feeble powers; the author of all liberty, loosing us from captivity under the tyranny of Satan, from vassalage unto our own carnal lusts and passions; from subjection to a hard and imperious law, from bondage to the

terrors of a guilty conscience: as him, that enableth us to perform the duties, and accomplish the conditions, required of us in order to our salvation, that qualifieth us to be the sons of God by his effectual grace, and assureth us that we are so by his comfortable testimony; as our sure guide in the ways of truth and virtue; our faithful counsellor in all doubts and darknesses; our mighty support and succour in all needs, in all distresses; our ready guard against all assaults and temptations; our sweet comforter in all sadnesses and afflictions: who doth insinuate good thoughts, doth kindle holy desires, doth cherish pious resolutions, doth further honest endeavours in us: who only doth inflame our hearts with devotion toward God; doth encourage, doth enable us to approach unto him; doth prompt us with fit matter of request, and becometh advocate for the good success of our prayers.

We should mind him as the root of all good fruits growing in us, or sprouting from us; the producer of all good habits formed in us, the assister of all good works performed by us, the spring of all true content that we enjoy; to whom our embracing the faith, our continuing in hope, our working in charity, the purification of our hearts, the mortification of our lusts, the sanctification of our lives, the salvation of our souls are principally due, are most justly ascribed: as the author and preserver of so inestimable benefits unto us, let us mind him; and withal let us consider him as condescending to be a loving friend and constant guest to so mean and unworthy creatures; vouchsafing to attend over us, to converse with us, to dwell in us, rendering our souls holy temples of his divinity, royal thrones of

his majesty, bright orbs of his heavenly light, pleasant paradises of his blissful presence; our souls, which naturally are profane receptacles of wicked and impure affections, dark cells of false and fond imaginations, close prisons of black and sad thoughts: as graciously *striving with us*, striving to open and enter into our hearts barred against him by vain conceits and vicious inclinations: striving to reclaim us from the sins and errors, into which we are wont heedlessly or wilfully to precipitate ourselves; striving to make us, what in all duty and wisdom we should be, capable of divine favour, and fit for everlasting happiness: as enduring patiently manifold displeasures and disrespects from us, our rude oppositions against him, our frequent neglects of his kind admonitions, our many perverse humours, wanton freaks, wilful miscarriages, and unworthy dealings toward him.

We should thus mind the blessed Spirit of God, and be suitably affected toward him; so as to be duly sensible and thankful for those unexpressible gifts and blessings indulged to us by him; so as to render all love and reverence, all praise and glory, all obedience and service to him, especially so as to admit him cheerfully into our hearts; yea, invite him thither by our earnest prayers; to make fit preparations for his reception and entertainment, (by cleansing our hearts from all loathsome impurities,) to make him welcome, and treat him kindly, with all civil respect, with all humble observance; not grieving and vexing him by our distasteful crossness and peevishness; not tempting him by our fond presumption, or base treachery; not extinguishing his heavenly light and holy fire by our foul lusts,

our damp stupidities, our cold neglects, our neglects to foment and nourish them by the food of devout meditations and zealous desires: so let us mind him, as to admit gladly his gentle illapses, to delight in his most pleasant society, to hearken to his faithful suggestions, to comply with all his kindly motions, to behave ourselves modestly, consistently, and officiously toward him.

Thus should we employ our mind, all the faculties of our soul, our understanding, our will, our affections upon the blessed Trinity, the Supreme of all things above, the Founder of that celestial society, into which as Christians we are inserted; the Sovereign of that heavenly kingdom of which we are subjects; the Fountain of all the good and happiness we can hope for in that superior state. To the performance of which duty there be arguments and inducements innumerable; it is the most proper and connatural object of our mind, that for which it is fittest, and for which it was designed; the best intelligible, and infinitely most amiable of all things. It is the most worthy and noble object, the contemplation of which, and affection whereto, will most elevate, most enrich, most adorn, most enlarge the capacities, and most satisfy the appetites of our souls; it is the most sweet and pleasant object, wherein all light, all beauty, all perfection do shine; the sight and love of which do constitute Paradise, and beatify heaven itself. It is the most useful and beneficial object of our mind, which will best instruct us in what it concerneth us to know, will most incite us to those duties which we are obliged to perform, will be most efficacious to the begetting in us those dispositions, which are indispensably re-

quisite for the attainment and for the enjoyment of that everlasting bliss; unto which that one blessed Unity and glorious Trinity in its infinite mercy bring us all: to whom be all glory, honour, and praise for ever. *Amen.*

THE

CHRISTIAN FAITH

EXPLAINED AND VINDICATED

IN SEVERAL

SERMONS

UPON

THE CHIEF ARTICLES OF IT

CONTAINED IN

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

TO THE KING.

SIR,

I MOST humbly present to Your Majesty a work, the author whereof, my son, was much the more dear to me for his constant and exemplary loyalty. Not only the general obligation of a subject always engaged him to Your Majesty's service, but the particular favours wherewith you were pleased to honour and encourage his studies, might probably have induced him to a Dedication of this kind, if his modesty would have let him think any thing of his worthy Your Majesty's patronage. This, which I here offer, is, by those who are better able to judge of it than myself, valued as the most considerable of his productions: but it chiefly presumes to entitle itself to your royal protection, because it is an Explication and Vindication of that Christian Faith, whereof Your Majesty is the great Defender.

And, Sir, I beg leave to take this opportu-

nity to make as public an acknowledgment as I can, of that great goodness Your Majesty has shewn in the acceptance and recompense of the fidelity I have through a course of many years borne to the cause of Your Majesty and your Royal Father.

Long may Your Majesty live and reign under the happy conduct and blessing of that Wisdom, in whose right hand is length of days, and in her left hand riches and honour. I am,

May it please your Majesty,
Your Majesty's most humble,
faithful, and obedient
Subject and Servant,
THOMAS BARROW.

I Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

SERMON I.

OF THE EVIL AND UNREASONABLENESS OF INFIDELITY.

HEB. iii. 12.

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.

IF the causes of all the sin and all the mischief in the world were carefully sought, we should find the chief of all to be infidelity; either total or gradual. Wherefore to dehort and dissuade from it is a very profitable design; and this, with God's assistance, I shall endeavour from these words; in which two particulars naturally do offer themselves to our observation; an assertion implied, that infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart; and a duty recommended, that we be careful to void or correct that distemper: of these to declare the one, and to press the other, shall be the scope of my Discourse.

SERM. I.

That infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart, appeareth by divers express testimonies of scripture, and by many good reasons grounded thereon.

It is by our Saviour in terms called *sin: when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin,—of sin,* John xvi. 8, 9.

SERM. I.

because they believe not in me: and, *If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin:* and, *If ye were blind, ye should not have had sin; but now ye say, We see, therefore your sin abideth.* What sin? that of infidelity, for which they were culpable, having such powerful means and arguments to believe imparted to them, without due effect.

John xv. 22. ix. 41. (viii. 24.) ix. 41.

It hath a condemnation grounded thereon; *He,* saith our Saviour, *that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*[a]: but condemnation ever doth suppose faultiness.

It hath sore punishment denounced thereto; *God,* saith St. Paul, *shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness;* and, Our Lord, saith he, at his coming to judgment, will *take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;* whence among those, who *have their part in the lake burning with fire and brimstone, the fearful, and unbelievers* (that is, they who fear to profess, or refuse to believe the Christian doctrine) are reckoned in the first place; which implieth infidelity to be a heinous sin.

2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.

2 Thess. i. 8.

Rev. xii. 8.

It is also such, because it is a *transgression of* a principal *law,* or divine command; *This,* saith St. John, *is* ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτοῦ, *the command of him, That we should believe; this,* saith our Lord, is τὸ ἔργον

1 John iii. 23.

John vi. 29.

[a] John iii. 18. xii. 48. Οὐ γὰρ μόνον τὸ μὴ εἶκειν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀπιστεῖν αὐταῖς χαλεπωτάτην ἐπάγει τὴν κόλασιν. Chrys. ad Demat. tom. vi. p. 140.

τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the* signal *work of God*, (which God requireth of us,) that *ye believe on him, whom he hath sent:* that was a duty, which our Lord and his apostles chiefly did teach, enjoin, and press; wherefore correspondently infidelity is a great sin; according to St. John's notion, that *sin* is ἀνομία, *the transgression of a law.* SERM. I. Mark i. 15. 1 John iii. 4.

But the sinfulness of infidelity will appear more fully by considering its nature and ingredients; its causes; its properties and adjuncts; its effects and consequences.

I. In its nature it doth involve an affected blindness and ignorance of the noblest and most useful truths; a bad use of reason, and most culpable imprudence; disregard of God's providence, or despite thereto; abuse of his grace; bad opinions of him, and bad affections toward him; for

God in exceeding goodness and kindness to mankind hath proposed a doctrine, in itself *faithful and worthy of all acceptation,* containing most excellent truths instructive of our mind and directive of our practice, toward attainment of salvation and eternal felicity; special overtures of mercy and grace most needful to us in our state of sinful guilt, of weakness, of wretchedness; high encouragements and rich promises of reward for obedience: such a doctrine, with all its benefits, infidelity doth reject, *defeating the counsel of God,* crossing his earnest *desires* of our welfare, *despising his goodness and patience.* Tit. ii. 11. iii. 4. 1 Tim. i. 15. Luke vii. 30. Matt. xxiii. 37. 1 Tim. ii. 4. Luke x. 16. Rom. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9, 15.

To this doctrine God hath yielded manifold clear attestations, declaring it to proceed from himself; ancient presignifications and predictions; audible voices and visible apparitions from heaven, innumerable miraculous works, Providence concurring 1 Pet. i. 10. Acts iii. 18. Luke xxiv. 44. Heb. ii. 4. Acts iv. 33. xix. 20. ii. 47. vi. 7. xii. 24.

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to the maintenance and propagation of it against most powerful oppositions and disadvantages: but all these testimonies infidelity slighteth, not fearing to give their author the lie, which wicked boldness St. John chargeth on it; *He*, saith the apostle, *that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the testimony that God gave of his Son.*

1 John v. 10.

Many plain arguments, sufficient to convince our minds, and win our belief, God hath furnished; the dictates of natural conscience, the testimony of experience, the records of history, the consent of the best and wisest men, do all conspire to prove the truth, to recommend the usefulness of this doctrine; but infidelity will not regard, will not weigh, will not yield to reason.

God by his providence doth offer means and motives inducing to belief, by the promulgation of his gospel, and exhortation of his ministers: but all such methods infidelity doth void and frustrate; *thrusting away the word, turning away the ear from the truth, letting the seed fall beside us, casting away the law of the Lord of hosts*; in effect (as those in Job) *saying to God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*

2 Cor. v. 20. Acts xiii. 46. 2 Tim. iv. 4. Matt. xiii. Isa. v. 24. Job xxi. 14.

God by his grace *doth shine upon our hearts*, doth attract our wills to compliance with his will, doth excite our affections to relish his truth: but infidelity doth *resist his Spirit*, doth quench the heavenly light, doth smother all the suggestions and motions of divine grace within us.

John vi. 44. (Rev. iii. 20.) Acts vii. 51. 1 Thess. v. 19. 2 Cor. iv. 4.

What God asserteth, infidelity denieth, questioning his veracity; what God commandeth, infidelity doth not approve, contesting his wisdom; what God

promiseth, infidelity will not confide in, distrusting his fidelity, or his power: such is its behaviour (so injurious, so rude, so foolish) toward God, and his truth; this briefly is its nature, manifestly involving great pravity, iniquity, and impiety. SERM. I.

II. The causes and sources from whence it springeth (touched in scripture, and obvious to experience) are those which follow.

1. It commonly doth proceed from negligence, or drowsy inobservance and carelessness; when men being possessed with a *spirit of slumber*, or being amused with secular entertainments, do not mind the concerns of their soul, or regard the means by God's merciful care presented for their conversion; being in regard to religious matters of Gallio's humour, *caring for none of those things:* thus, when the king in the gospel sent to invite persons to his wedding feast, it is said, Οἱ δὲ ἀμελήσαντες ἀπήλθον, they *being careless, or not regarding it, went their ways, one to his field, another to his trade.* Of such the apostle to the Hebrews saith, *How shall we escape,* τοιαύτης ἀμελήσαντες σωτηρίας, *who regard not so great salvation,* exhibited to us? Of such Wisdom complaineth; *I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. No man:* the greatest part indeed of men are upon this account infidels, for that being wholly taken up in pursuit of worldly affairs and divertisements, in amassing of wealth, in driving on projects of ambition, in enjoying sensual pleasures, in gratifying their fancy and humour with vain curiosities, or sports, they can hardly lend an ear to instruction; so they become unacquainted with the notions of Christian doctrine; the which to them are

Rom. xi. 8.

Acts xviii. 17.

Matt. xxii. 5.

Heb. ii. 3.

Prov. i. 24. Isa. lxv. 12. lxvi. 4. Jer. vii. 31.

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as *the seed falling by the way side*, which those *fowls of the air* do snatch and devour before it sinketh down into the earth, or doth come under consideration. Hence is unbelief commonly termed not *hearing God's voice*, not hearkening to God's word, the din of worldly business rendering men deaf to divine suggestions.

Matt. xiii. 4.

2. Another source of infidelity is sloth, which indisposeth men to undergo the fatigue of seriously attending to the doctrine propounded, of examining its grounds, of weighing the reasons inducing to believe; whence at first hearing, if the notions hap not to hit their fancy, they do slight it before they fully understand it, or know its grounds; thence at least they must needs fail of a firm and steady belief, the which can alone be founded on a clear apprehension of the matter, and perception of its agreeableness to reason: so when the Athenians did hear St. Paul declaring the grand points of faith, somewhat in his discourse uncouth to their conceit falling from him, some of them did scorn, others did neglect his doctrine; *some mocked; others said, We will hear thee again of this matter;* so Agrippa was *almost persuaded to be a Christian*, but had not the industry to prosecute his inquiry, till he arrived to a full satisfaction. A solid faith (with clear understanding and firm persuasion) doth indeed, no less than any science, require sedulous and persevering study; so that as a man can never be learned, who will not be studious; so a sluggard cannot prove a good believer.

Acts xvii. 32.

xxvi. 28.

3. Infidelity doth arise from stupidity, or dulness of apprehension, (I mean not that which is natural; for any man in his senses, how low soever other-

e in parts or improvements, is capable to under- SERM. I.
id the Christian doctrine, and to perceive reason
icient to convince him of its truth; but,) contracted
voluntary indispositions and defects; a stupidity
ig from mists of prejudice, from steams of lust
passion, from rust grown on the mind by want
xercising it in observing and comparing things;
nce men cannot apprehend the clearest notions
nly represented to them, nor discern the force of
ıments, however evident and cogent; but are
those wizards in Job, who *meet with darkness* Job v. 14.
he day-time, and grope at noonday, as in the Isa. lix. 10. Deut. xxviii. 29.
ht.

This is that which is so often charged on the
s as cause of their infidelity; who [e] *did hear but understand, and did see but not perceive; because their heart was gross, and their ears were l of hearing, and their eyes were closed;* this is t πώρωσις καρδίας, that *numbness of heart*, which epresented as the common obstruction to the ception and admission of our Lord's doctrine: our Lord blamed in his own disciples, when he ıked them thus; *O fools, and slow of heart* Luke xxiv. 45.
believe all that the prophets have spoken! this the apostle doth complain, telling the Hews, that they were uncapable of improvement in owledge, because they were νωθροὶ ταῖς ἀκοαῖς, *dull* Heb. v. 11, 14.
hearing for want of skill and use, *not having ir senses exercised to discern both good and :* there is indeed to a sound and robust faith reed a good perspicacy of apprehension, a pene-

Acts xxviii. 26.—Isa. vi. 9. Matt. xiii. 14. John xii. 40. Rom. , 8, 25. Eph. iv. 18. Isa. xxix. 10. Ezek. xxi. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 14. k iii. 5. vi. 52. viii. 17.

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trancy of judgment, a vigour and quickness of mind, grounded in the purity of our faculties, and confirmed by exercise of them in consideration of spiritual things.

4. Another cause of infidelity is a bad judgment; corrupted with prejudicate notions, and partial inclinations to falsehood. Men are apt to entertain prejudices favourable to their natural appetites and humours; to their lusts, to their present interests; dictating to them, that wealth, dignity, fame, pleasure, ease, are things most desirable, and necessary ingredients of happiness; so that it is a sad thing in any case to want them: all men have strong inclinations biassing them toward such things; it is a hard thing to shake off such prejudices, and to check such inclinations; it is therefore not easy to entertain a doctrine representing such things indifferent, obliging us sometimes to reject them, always to be moderate in the pursuit and enjoyment of them: wherefore infidelity will naturally spring up in a mind not cleansed from those corruptions of judgment.

Matt. xvi. 23. John vi. 60, 66.

5. Another source of infidelity is perverseness of will, which hindereth men from entertaining notions disagreeable to their fond or froward humour: ὦ γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη, *O faithless and perverse generation!* those epithets are well coupled, for he that is perverse will be faithless; in proportion to the one the other bad quality will prevail. *The weapons of the apostolical warfare* (against the infidel world) *were*, as St. Paul telleth us, *mighty to the casting down of strong holds:* so it was; and the apostles, by their discourse and demeanour, effectually did force many a strong fortress to surrender; but the will of some men is an impregnable

Matt. xvii. 17.

2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

Οὐ πάντες ὑπακοὴ τὰ

bulwark against all batteries of discourse; they are so invincibly stubborn, as to hold out against the clearest evidence and mightiest force of reason: if they do not like what you say, if it cross any humour of theirs, be it clear as day, be it firm as an adamant, they will not admit it; you shall not persuade them, though you do persuade them. Such was the temper of the Jews, whom St. Stephen therefore calleth *a stiffnecked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears*; who although they did hear the most winning discourse that ever was uttered, although they saw the most admirable works that ever were performed, yet would they not yield to the doctrine; the mean garb of the persons teaching it, the spirituality of its design, the strict goodness of its precepts, and the like considerations, not sorting with their fancies and desires; they hoping for a Messias arrayed with gay appearances of external grandeur and splendour, whose chief work it should be to settle their nation in a state of worldly prosperity and glory.

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σημεῖα, ἀλλὰ μόνους τοὺς εὐγνώμονας. Const. Apost. viii. 1.

Acts vii. 51, 54. Jer. vi. 10. ix. 26.

6. This is that hardness of heart, which is so often represented as an obstruction of belief; this hindered Pharaoh, notwithstanding all those mighty works performed before him, from *hearkening* to God's word, and regarding the mischiefs threatened to come on him for his disobedience; *I will not*, said he, *let Israel go*; his will was his reason, which no persuasion, no judgment could subdue: this was the cause of that monstrous infidelity in the Israelites, which baffled all the methods which God used to persuade and convert them; *Notwithstanding*, it is said, *they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fa-*

Exod. vii. 4, 22. viii. 15, 19. ix. 12.

2 Kings xvii. 14.

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thers, that did not believe in the Lord their God: whence that exhortation to them; *To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* And to obduration the disbelief of the gospel upon the apostles' preaching is in like manner ascribed; St. Paul, it is said in the Acts, *went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God: but divers were hardened, and believed not:* and, *Exhort one another daily,* saith the apostle, *lest any of you be hardened* (in unbelief) *through the deceitfulness of sin.*

Ps. xcv. 8. Heb. iii. 8.

Acts xix. 8, 9.

Heb. iii. 13. *Vid.* Mark xvi. 14.

7. Of kin to that perverseness of heart is that squeamish delicacy and niceness of humour, which will not let men entertain or savour any thing, anywise seeming hard or harsh to them, if they cannot presently comprehend all that is said, if they can frame any cavil or little exception against it, if every scruple be not voided, if any thing be required distasteful to their sense; they are offended, and their faith is choked; you must, to satisfy them, *speak to them smooth things,* which nowise grate on their conceit or pleasure: so when our Lord discoursed somewhat mysteriously, representing himself in the figure of heavenly bread (typified by the manna of old) given for the world, to sustain men in life; *Many of his disciples, hearing this, said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it?* and *from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him:* this is that which is called being *scandalized at the word,* and *stumbling at it;* concerning which our Saviour saith, *Blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.*

Isa. xxx. 10.

John vi. 60, 66.

1 Pet. ii. 8.

John vi. 61.

Matt. xxiv. 10. xiii. 21.

Matt. xi. 6.

In regard to this weakness, the apostles were fain in their instructions to use prudent dispensation, proposing only to some persons the most easy points of doctrine, they not being able to digest such as were more tough and difficult: *I have,* saith St. Paul, *fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able* to bear it—*for ye are yet carnal;* and, *Ye,* saith the apostle to the Hebrews, *are such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.* SERM. I. 1 Cor. iii. 2. Heb. v. 12.

Such were even the apostles themselves in their minority; *not savouring the things of God;* being *offended at* our Lord's discourses, when he spake to them of suffering; and with his condition, when he entered into it. Matt. xvi. 23. xxvi. 31.

8. With these dispositions is connected a want of love to truth; the which if a man hath not, he cannot well entertain such notions as the gospel propoundeth, being nowise grateful to carnal sense and appetite: this cause St. Paul doth assign of the pagan doctors falling into so gross errors and vices, *because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge;* and of men's revolting from Christian truth to Antichristian imposture—*because they received not the love of truth, that they might be saved: for which cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:* nothing indeed, but an impartial and ingenuous love of truth (overbalancing all corrupt prejudices and affections) can engage a man heartily to embrace this holy and pure doctrine, can preserve a man in a firm adherence thereto. Rom. i. 28. 2 Thess. ii. 11.

9. A grand cause of infidelity is pride, the which doth interpose various bars to the admission of Chris-

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tian truth; for before a man can believe, πᾶν ὕψωμα, *every height* (every towering imagination and conceit) *that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God must be cast down.*

2 Cor. x. 5.

Pride fills a man with vanity and an affectation of seeming wise in special manner above others, thereby disposing him to maintain paradoxes, and to nauseate common truths received and believed by the generality of mankind.

A proud man is ever averse from renouncing his prejudices, and correcting his errors; doing which implieth a confession of weakness, ignorance, and folly, consequently depresseth him in his own conceit, and seemeth to impair that credit which he had with others from his wisdom; neither of which events he is able to endure.

He that is wise in his own conceit, will hug that conceit, and thence is uncapable to learn: *there is,* saith Solomon, *more hope of a fool than of him;* and he that affecteth the praise of men, will not easily part with it for the sake of truth: whence, *How,* saith our Lord, *can ye believe, who receive glory one of another?* how can ye, retaining such affections, be disposed to avow yourselves to have been ignorants and fools, whenas ye were reputed for learned and wise? how can ye endure to become novices, who did pass for doctors? how can ye allow yourselves so blind and weak, as to have been deceived in your former judgment of things.

Prov. xxvi. 12.

John v. 44. xii. 43.

1 Cor. iii. 18.

He that is conceited of his own wisdom, strength of parts, and improvement in knowledge, cannot submit his mind to notions which he cannot easily comprehend and penetrate; he will scorn to have his understanding baffled or puzzled by sublime myste-

ries of faith; he will not easily yield any thing too high for his wit to reach, or too knotty for him to unloose: *How can these things be?* what reason can there be for this? I cannot see how this can be true; this point is not intelligible: so he treateth the dictates of faith; not considering the feebleness and shallowness of his own reason: Hence *not many wise men according to the flesh,* (or who were conceited of their own wisdom, relying upon their natural faculties and means of knowledge,) not many scribes, or *disputers of this world,* did embrace the Christian truth, it appearing absurd and foolish to them; it being needful, that a man should *be a fool, that he might,* in this regard, *become wise.* SERM. I. John iii. 9. 1 Cor. i. 26. ii. 6. John vii. 26. 1 Cor. i. 20. i. 14. 1 Cor. iii. 18.

The prime notions of Christianity do also tend to the debasing human conceit, and to the exclusion of all glorying in ourselves; referring all to the praise and glory of God, ascribing all to his pure mercy, bounty, and grace: it representeth all men heinous sinners, void of all worth and merit, lapsed into a wretched state, altogether impotent, forlorn, and destitute of ability to help or relieve themselves; such notions proud hearts cannot digest; they cannot like to avow their infirmities, their defects, their wants, their vileness, and unworthiness; their distresses and miseries; they cannot endure to be entirely and absolutely beholden to favour and mercy for their happiness; such was the case of the Jews; who could not believe, because, *going about to establish their own righteousness, they would not submit to the righteousness of God. Dextra mihi Deus,* every proud man would say with the profane Mezentius. Rom. iii. 27. iv. 2, 16. ix. 11. xi. 6. 1 Cor. i. 29. iii. 21. Ephes. ii. 9. Tit. iii. 5. Rom. x. 3. ix. 31.

Christianity doth also much disparage and vilify

SERM. I. those things, for which men are apt much to prize and pride themselves; it maketh small account of wealth, of honour, of power, of wit, of secular wisdom, of any human excellency or worldly advantage: it levelleth the rich and the poor, the prince and the peasant, the philosopher and idiot in spiritual regards; yea far preferreth the meanest and simplest person, endued with true piety, above the mightiest and wealthiest, who is devoid thereof: in the eye of it, *the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour*, whatever he be in worldly regard or state: this a proud man cannot support; to be divested of his imaginary privileges, to be thrown down from his perch of eminency, to be set below those whom he so much despiseth, is insupportable to his spirit.

The practice of Christianity doth also expose men to the scorn and censure of profane men; who for their own solace, out of envy, revenge, diabolical spite, are apt to deride and reproach all conscientious and resolute practisers of their duty, as silly, credulous, superstitious, humorous, morose, sullen folks: so that he that will be good, must resolve to bear
2 Sam. vi. 22. that usage from them; like David; *I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in my own sight:* but with these sufferings a proud heart cannot comport; it goeth too much against the grain thereof to be contemned.

Christianity doth also indispensably require duties, pointblank opposite to pride; it placeth humility among its chief virtues, as a foundation of piety; it enjoineth us to think meanly of ourselves, to disclaim our own worth and desert, to have no complacency
Rom. xii. 3, 16. or confidence in any thing belonging to us; not to aim at high things; to wave the regard and praise

of men; it exacteth from us a sense of our vileness, remorse and contrition for our sins, with humble confession of them, self-condemnation and abhorrence; it chargeth us to bear injuries and affronts patiently, without grievous resentment, without seeking or so much as wishing any revenge; to undergo disgraces, crosses, disasters, willingly and gladly; it obligeth us *to prefer others before ourselves*, sitting down in the lowest room, yielding to the meanest persons: to all which sorts of duty a proud mind hath an irreconcileable antipathy. SERM. I. Job xlii. 3, 6. Phil. ii. 3. Rom. xii. 10. 1 Pet. v. 5. Luke xiv. 10. Rom. xii. 16.

A proud man, that is big and swollen with haughty conceit and stomach, cannot stoop down so low, cannot shrink in himself so much, as to *enter into the strait gate, or to walk in the narrow way, which leadeth to life:* he will be apt to contemn wisdom and instruction. Matt. vii. 14. Prov. i. 7, 30. v. 12. xiii. 13. Isa. v. 24. Ezek. xx. 13, 16, 24. Acts xiii. 41. (καταφρονηταί.) Luke x. 16. Rom. ii. 4.

Shall I, will he say, such a gallant as I, so accomplished in worth, so flourishing in dignity, so plump with wealth, so highly regarded and renowned among men, thus pitifully crouch and sneak? shall I deign to avow such beggarly notions, or bend to such homely duties? shall I disown my perfections, or forego my advantages? shall I profess myself to have been a despicable worm, a villainous caitiff, a sorry wretch? shall I suffer myself to be flouted as a timorous religionist, a scrupulous precisian, a conscientious sneaksby? shall I lie down at the foot of mercy, puling in sorrow, whining in confession, bewailing my guilt, and craving pardon? shall I allow any man better or happier than myself? shall I receive those into consortship, or equality of rank with me, who appear so much my inferiors? shall I be misused and trampled on, without doing myself right,

SERM. I. and making them smart who shall presume to wrong or cross me? shall I be content to be nobody in the world? So the proud man will say in his heart, contesting the doctrines and duties of our religion, and so disputing himself into infidelity.

10. Another spring of infidelity is pusillanimity, or want of good resolution and courage: δειλοὶ καὶ ἄπιστοι, *cowards and infidels,* are well joined among those who are devoted to the fiery lake; for timorous men dare not believe such doctrines, which engage them upon undertaking difficult, laborious, dangerous enterprises; upon undergoing hardships, pains, wants, disgraces; upon encountering those mighty and fierce enemies, with whom every faithful man continually doth wage war.

Rev. xxi. 8.

They have not the heart to look the world in the face, when it frowneth at them, menacing persecution and disgrace; but *when affliction ariseth for the word, they are presently scandalized.* It is said in the gospel, that *no man spake freely of our Lord for fear of the Jews:* as it so did smother the profession and muzzle the mouth, so it doth often stifle faith itself, and quell the heart, men fearing to harbour in their very thoughts points dangerous and discountenanced by worldly power.

Matt. xiii. 21. (John vii. 13. ix. 22. xix. 38.)

They have not also courage to adventure a combat with their own flesh, and *those lusts, which war against their souls;* to set upon correcting their temper, curbing their appetites, bridling their passions; keeping flesh and blood in order; upon pulling out their right eyes, and cutting off their right hands, and crucifying their members; it dauntеth them to attempt duties so harsh and painful.

Jam. iv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 11. Rom vii. 23.

They have not the resolution to withstand and

repel temptations, and in so doing to *wrestle with principalities and powers;* to resist and baffle the *strong one.* To part with their ease, their wealth, their pleasure, their credit, their accommodations of life, is a thing, any thought whereof doth quash all inclination in a faint and fearful heart of complying with the Christian doctrine. SERM. I. Eph. vi. 12. (Luke xiv. 31.)

Christianity is a warfare; living after its rules is called *fighting the good fight of faith;* every true Christian is a *good soldier of Jesus Christ;* the state of Christians must be sometimes like that of the apostles, who were *troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears:* great courage therefore, and undaunted resolution, are required toward the undertaking this religion, and the persisting in it cordially. 1 Tim. i. 18. Heb. xii. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 2 Cor. vii. 5.

11. Infidelity doth also rise from sturdiness, fierceness, wildness, untamed animosity of spirit; so that a man will not endure to have his will crossed, to be under any law, to be curbed from any thing which he is prone to affect.

12. Blind zeal, grounded upon prejudice, disposing men to stiff adherence unto that which they have once been addicted and accustomed to, is in the scripture frequently represented as a cause of infidelity. So the Jews being *filled with zeal, contradicted the things spoken by St. Paul;* flying at his doctrine, without weighing it: so *by instinct of zeal* did St. Paul himself *persecute the church;* being *exceedingly zealous for the traditions delivered by his fathers.* Acts xiii. 45. xvii. 5. v. 17. Rom. x. 2. Gal. iv. 17. Phil. iii. 6. κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων. Gal. i. 14. Acts xxvi. 11.

In fine, [d] infidelity doth issue from corruption of περισσῶς ἰμαινόμενος.

[d] Οὐ ῥάδιον πονηρίᾳ συντρεφόμενον ἀναβλέψαι ταχέως πρὸς τὸ τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν δογμάτων ὕψος, ἀλλὰ χρὴ πάντων καθαρεύειν τῶν παθῶν τὸν μέλλοντα θηρᾶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν. Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 8.

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mind by any kind of brutish lust, any irregular passion, any bad inclination or habit: any such evil disposition of soul doth obstruct the admission or entertainment of that doctrine, which doth prohibit and check it; doth condemn it, and brand it with infamy; doth denounce punishment and woe to it: whence *men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith;* and *men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth,* are attributes well conjoined by St. Paul, as commonly jumping together in practice; and *to them,* saith he, *that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled:* such pollution is not only consequent to, and connected with, but antecedent to infidelity, blinding the mind so as not to see the truth, and perverting the will so as not to close with it.

2 Tim. iii. 8.
1 Tim. vi. 5.
Tit. i. 15.

Faith and a good conscience are twins, born together, inseparable from each other, living and dying together; for the first, *faith* is (as St. Peter telleth us) nothing else but *the stipulation of a good conscience,* fully persuaded that Christianity is true, and firmly resolving to comply with it: and, *The end* (or drift and purport) *of the evangelical doctrine is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned:* whence those apostolical precepts, *to hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience;* and, *to hold faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning the faith have made shipwreck:* a man void of good conscience will not embark in Christianity; and having laid good conscience aside, he soon will make shipwreck of faith, by apostasy from it. Resolute indulgence to any one lust is apt to produce this effect.

1 Pet. iii. 21.
1 Tim. i. 5.
1 Tim. iii. 9. i. 19.

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If a man be covetous, he can *hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*, or submit to that heavenly law, which forbiddeth us *to treasure up treasures upon earth;* which chargeth us to be liberal *in communication of our goods;* so as to *give unto every one that asketh;* which in some cases requireth to *sell all our goods, and to give them to the poor;* which declareth, that *whosoever doth not bid farewell to all that he hath, cannot be a disciple of Christ;* which ascribeth *happiness to the poor,* and denounceth *woe to the rich, who have their consolation here.* Preach such doctrine to a covetous person, and, as the young gentleman who *had great possessions,* he will *go his way sorrowful;* or will do like the Pharisees, who *were covetous,* and *having heard* our Saviour discourse such things, *derided him:* for *the love of money,* saith St. Paul, *is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith;* ἀπεπλανήθησαν, *they have wandered away,* or apostatized from the faith.

Matt. xix. 23. vi. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 18. Heb. xiii. 16. Luke xvi. 9. Luke vi. 30. Matt. xix. 20. Luke xiv. 33. Luke vi. 20, 24. Matt. xix. 22. Luke xvi. 14. ἐξεμυκτήριζον αὐτόν. 1 Tim. vi. 10.

If a man be ambitious, he will not approve that doctrine, which prohibiteth us to affect, to seek, to admit glory, or to do any thing for its sake; but purely to seek God's honour, and in all our actions to regard it as our principal aim: which greatly disparageth all worldly glory, as vain, transitory, mischievous; which commandeth us *in honour to prefer others before ourselves,* and to *sit down in the lowest room;* which promiseth the best rewards to humility, and menaceth, that whoever *exalteth himself shall be abased;* the profession and practice whereof are commonly attended with disgrace: such doctrines ambitious minds cannot admit; as it proved

Phil. ii. 3. Gal. v. 26. John xii. 43. v. 44. Matt. vi. 1. 1 Pet. i. 24. 1 Cor. vii. 31. 1 John ii. 16. Rom. xii. 10. Luke xiv. 10. Matt. xxiii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14.

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among the Jews; who therefore *could not believe, because they received glory from one another;* who therefore would not profess the faith, *because they loved the glory of men rather than the glory of God.*

John v. 44. xii. 43.

If a man be envious, he will not like that doctrine, which enjoineth him to desire the good of his neighbour, as his own; to have complacence in the prosperity and dignity of his brethren; *not to seek his own, but every man another's wealth,* or welfare; to *rejoice with them that rejoice, and mourn with those that mourn;* which chargeth us *to lay aside all envyings and emulations,* under pain of damnation: he therefore who is possessed with an envious spirit, or *evil eye,* will look ill upon this doctrine; as the Jews did, who being *full of envy* and emulation, did reject the gospel; it being a grievous eyesore to them, that the poor Gentiles were thereby admitted to favour and mercy.

1 Cor. xii. 26. συγχαίρειν. 1 Cor. x. 24. Phil. ii. 4. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 1. Gal. v. 20. Rom. xiii. 13. Jam. iii. 14, 16. Acts v. 17. xiii. 45. xvii. 5.

If a man be revengeful or spiteful, he will be scandalized at that law, which commandeth us *to love our enemies,* to *bless those that curse us,* to *do good to them that hate us,* to *pray for them that despitefully use us;* which forbiddeth us to *resist the evil, to render evil for evil, or railing for railing;* which chargeth us to bear patiently, and freely to remit all injuries, under penalty of forfeiting all hopes of mercy from God; which requireth us to *depose all wrath, animosity, and malice,* as inconsistent with our salvation: which doctrine how can a heart swelling with rancorous grudge or boiling with anger embrace? seeing it must be *in meekness that we must receive the engrafted word, that is able to save our souls.*

Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20, 17. 1 Pet. iii. 9. Matt. v. 39. 1 Cor. vi. 7. 1 Thess. v. 15. Col. iii. 13. Eph. iv. 32. Matt. vi. 15. xviii. 35. Col. iii. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 1. Gal. v. 20. Eph. iv. 31. Jam. i. 21.

ıan be intemperate, he will loathe that doc- SERM. I.
e precepts of which are, that we be *tem-*
in all things, that *we bring under our* 2 Tim. iv. 5.
:hat we *endure hardship as good soldiers* 1 Cor. ix. 25, 27.
it; to *avoid all excess*; to *possess our ves-* 2 Tim. ii. 3. i. 8. iv. 5.
sanctification and honour; to *mortify our* Eph. v. 18. 1 Thess. iv. 4.
s upon earth; to *crucify the flesh with its* Col. iii. 5.
ıs and lusts; to *abstain from fleshly lusts*, Gal. v. 24. 2 Pet. ii. 11.
war against the soul: with which precepts
ı a luxurious and filthy heart comport?
e, whatever corrupt affection a man be pos-
rith, it will work in him a distaste and re- Eph. ii. 11. iv. 22.
:e to that doctrine, which indispensably, as Rom. vi. 6.
:ion of salvation, doth prescribe and require 1 Thess. iv. 3.
ıl holiness, purity, innocence, virtue, and Eph. v. 6. Col. iii. 6.
s; which doth not allow any one sin to be
or indulged; which threateneth wrath and
ıce upon all impiety, iniquity, impurity, where-
lo obstinately persist; indifferently, without
erve or remedy; *wherein the wrath of God* Rom. i. 18. ii. 8.
ıled from heaven upon all ungodliness and
teousness of men, that detain the truth in
teousness.
mpure, a dissolute, a passionate soul cannot
o holy notions, cannot comply with so strict
s the gospel doth recommend; as a sore eye
like the bright day; as a sickly palate cannot
savoury food[c]. *Every one that doeth evil* John iii. 20.
the light, because it discovereth to him his

παθὴς ψυχὴ οὐ δύναται μέγα τι καὶ γενναῖον ἰδεῖν, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ὑπὸ ς θολουμένη ἀμβλυωπίαν ὑπομένει τὴν χαλεπωτάτην. Chrys. in t. 25.

ἀρ, ἔστι καὶ ἀπὸ τρόπων διεφθαρμένων, οὐκ ἀπὸ πολυπραγμοσύνης ρου σκοτωθῆναι τὴν διάνοιαν. Ibid.

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own vileness and folly; because it detecteth the sadness and wofulness of his condition; because it kindleth anguish and remorse within him; because it checketh him in the free pursuit of his bad designs, it dampeth the brisk enjoyment of his unlawful pleasures, it robbeth him of satisfaction and glee in any vicious course of practice.

Every man is unwilling to entertain a bad conceit of himself, and to pass on himself a sad doom: he therefore will be apt to reject that doctrine, which being supposed true, he cannot but confess himself to be an arrant fool, he cannot but grant himself a forlorn wretch.

No man liketh to be galled, to be stung, to be racked with a sense of guilt, to be scared with a dread of punishment, to live under awe and apprehension of imminent danger; gladly therefore would he shun that doctrine, which demonstrateth him a grievous sinner, which speaketh dismal terror, which thundereth ghastly woe upon him.

He cannot love that truth, which is so much his enemy, which so rudely treateth and severely persecuteth him; which telleth him so bad and unwelcome news[f].

Who would be content to deem Omnipotency engaged against him? to fancy himself standing on the brink of a fiery lake? to hear a roaring lion, ready to devour him? to suppose that certain, which is so dreadful and sad to him?

Rom. viii. 7. Job xxiv. 13. Ecclus. xv. 7.

Hence it is, that *the carnal mind is enmity to God;* hence do bad men *rebel against the light;* hence, *foolish men shall not attain to wisdom, and*

[f] They hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. Prov. i. 29. v. 12.

sinners shall not see her; for she is far from pride, and men that are liars cannot remember her. SERM. I.

Hence a man resolvedly wicked cannot but be willing to be an infidel, in his own defence, for his own quiet and ease; faith being a companion very incommodious, intolerably troublesome to a bad conscience[g].

Being resolved not to forsake his lusts, he must quit those opinions which cross them; seeing it expedient that the gospel should be false, he will be inclinable to think it so: thus he sinketh down, thus he tumbleth himself headlong into the gulf of infidelity.

The custom of sinning doth also by degrees so abate, and at length so destroy, the loathsomeness, the ugliness, the horror thereof, doth so reconcile it to our minds, yea conciliateth such a friendship to it, that we cannot easily believe it so horrid and base a thing as by the gospel it is represented to us.

Vicious practice doth also weaken the judgment and stupify the faculties. So that we cannot clearly apprehend, or judge soundly about spiritual matters. ἡ πονηρία φθαρτικὴ τῶν ἐρχῶν. Vid. Chrys. in Joh. Or. 5. (p. 582.)

The same also quencheth God's Spirit, and driveth away his grace, which is requisite to the production and preservation of faith in us.

14. In fine, from what spirit infidelity doth pro-

[g] Τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς ἐκ τοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν ἐκλέλυσθαι τῶν ἐντολῶν γίνεται, &c. Chrys. tom. vi. Orat. 12. (p. 140.)

Ὥστε εἰ μέλλομεν ἐῤῥιζωμένην ἔχειν τὴν πίστιν, πολιτείας ἡμῖν δεῖ καθαρᾶς, τῆς τὸ πνεῦμα πειθούσης μένειν, καὶ συνέχειν ἐκείνης τὴν δύναμιν· Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν, οὐκ ἐστὶ βίον ἀκάθαρτον ἔχοντα μὴ περὶ πίστιν σαλεύεσθαι, &c. Chrys. tom. v. Or. 55.

SERM. I. ceed we may see by the principles, commonly with it espoused, for its support and countenance, by its great masters and patrons; all which do rankly savour of baseness and ill-nature.

They do libel and revile mankind as void of all true goodness; from the worst qualities, of which they are conscious themselves or can observe in others, patching up an odious character of it; thus shrouding themselves under common blame from that which is due to their own wickedness; and dispensing with that charity and honesty, which is by God's law required from them toward their neighbour: and having so bad an opinion of all men, they consequently must bear ill-will toward them; it not being possible to love that which we do not esteem.

They allow nothing in man to be immaterial, or immortal; so turning him into a beast, or into a puppet, a whirligig of fate or chance.

They ascribe all actions and events to necessity, or external impulse, so rasing the grounds of justice and all virtue; that no man may seem responsible for what he doth, commendable or culpable, amiable or detestable.

They explode all natural difference of good and evil; deriding benignity, mercy, pity, gratitude, ingenuity, that is, all instances of good-nature, as childish and silly dispositions.

All the relics of God's image in man, which raise him above a beast, and distinguish him from a fiend, they scorn and expose to contempt.

They extol power as the most admirable, and disparage goodness as a pitiful thing; so preferring a devil before an angel.

They discard conscience, as a bugbear, to fright

hildren and fools; allowing men to compass their SERM.
esigns by violence, fraud, slander, any wrongful I.
ays; so banishing all the securities (beside selfish-
ss and slavish fear) of government, conversation,
id commerce; so that nothing should hinder a man
f he can do it with advantage to himself and pro-
ible safety) to rebel against his prince, to betray his
ountry, to abuse his friend, to cheat any man with
hom he dealeth.

Such are the principles (not only avowed in com-
ion discourse, but taught and maintained in the
ritings) of our infidels; whereby the sources of it
o appear to be a deplorable blindness, and desperate
orruption of mind; an extinction of natural light,
nd extirpation of good-nature. Further,

III. The naughtiness of infidelity will appear
y considering its effects and consequences; which
re plainly a spawn of all vices and villanies, a de-
uge of all mischiefs and outrages upon the earth:
or faith being removed, together with it all con-
cience goeth; no virtue can remain; all sobriety of
nind, all justice in dealing, all security in conversa-
ion are packed away; nothing resteth to encourage
nen unto any good, or restrain them from any evil;
ll hopes of reward from God, all fears of punish-
nent from him being discarded. No principle, or
ule of practice, is left, beside brutish sensuality, fond
elf-love, private interest, in their highest pitch, with-
ut any bound or curb; which therefore will dispose
nen to do nothing but to prey on each other, with
ll cruel violence and base treachery. Every man
hence will be a god to himself, a fiend to each other;
o that necessarily the world will thence be turned
nto a chaos and a hell, full of iniquity and impurity,

SERM. I. of spite and rage, of misery and torment. It deprives each man of all hope from Providence, all comfort and support in affliction, of all satisfaction in conscience; of all the good things which faith doth yield.

The consideration of which numberless and unspeakable mischiefs hath engaged statesmen in every commonwealth to support some kind of faith, as needful to the maintenance of public order, of traffick, of peace among men.

It would suffice to persuade an infidel, that hath a scrap of wit, (for his own interest, safety, and pleasure,) to cherish faith in others, and wish all men beside himself endued with it.

It in reason obligeth all men to detest atheistical supplanters of faith, as desperate enemies to mankind, enemies to government, destructive of common society; especially considering that of all religions that ever were, or can be, the Christian doth most conduce to the benefit of public society; enjoining all virtues useful to preserve it in a quiet and flourishing state, teaching loyalty under pain of damnation.

Heb. xi. 6. I pass by, that *without faith no man can please God;* that infidelity doth expose men to his wrath and severest vengeance; that it depriveth of all joy and happiness; seeing infidels will not grant such effects to follow their sin, but will reject the supposition of them as precarious and fictitious.

To conclude therefore the point, it is, from what we have said, sufficiently manifest, that infidelity is a very sinful distemper, as being in its nature so bad, being the daughter of so bad causes, the sister of so bad adjuncts, the mother of so bad effects.

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But this you will say is an improper subject: for is there any such thing as infidelity in Christendom? are we not all Christians, all believers, all baptized into the faith, and professors of it? do we not every day repeat the Creed, or at least say Amen thereto? do we not partake of the holy mysteries, sealing this profession? what do you take us for? for pagans? this is a subject to be treated of in Turkey, or *in partibus infidelium.* This may be said: but if we consider better, we shall find ground more than enough for such discourse; and that infidelity hath a larger territory than we suppose: for (to pass over the swarms of atheistical apostates, which so openly abound, denying or questioning our religion) many infidels do lurk under the mask of Christian profession. It is not the name of Christian, or the badges of our religion, that make a Christian; no more than a cowl doth make a monk, or the beard a philosopher: there may be a creed in the mouth, where there is no faith in the heart, and a cross impressed on the forehead of an infidel; *with the heart man believeth to righteousness.* Rom. x. 8. *Shew me thy faith by thy works,* saith St. James: if no works be shewed, no faith is to be granted; as where no fruit, there no root, or a dead root, which in effect and moral esteem is none at all. Jam. ii. 18.

Is he not an infidel, who denieth God? such a renegado is every one that liveth profanely, as St. Paul telleth us. And have we not many such renegadoes? if not, what meaneth that monstrous dissoluteness of life, that horrid profaneness of discourse, that strange neglect of God's service, a desolation of God's law? Where such luxury, such lewdness, such avarice, such uncharitableness, such universal car- Tit. i. 16.

SERM. I. nality doth reign, can faith be there? can a man believe there is a God, and so affront him? can he believe that Christ reigneth in heaven, and so despise his laws? can a man believe a judgment to come, and so little regard his life; a heaven, and so little seek it; a hell, and so little shun it?—Faith therefore is not so rife, infidelity is more common than we may take it to be; every sin hath a spice of it, some sins smell rankly of it.

To it are attributed all the rebellions of the Israelites, which are the types of all Christian professors, who seem travellers in this earthly wilderness toward the heavenly Canaan; and to it all the enormities of sin and overflowings of iniquity may be ascribed.

I should proceed to urge the precept, that we *take heed thereof*; but the time will not allow me to do it: I shall only suggest to your meditation the heads of things.

It is infidelity, that maketh men covetous, uncharitable, discontent, pusillanimous, impatient.

Because men believe not Providence, therefore they do so greedily scrape and hoard.

They do not believe any reward for charity, therefore they will part with nothing.

They do not hope for succour from God, therefore are they discontent and impatient.

They have nothing to raise their spirits, therefore are they abject.

Infidelity did cause the Devil's apostasy.

Infidelity did banish man from paradise, (trusting to the Devil, and distrusting God's word.)

Infidelity (disregarding the warnings and threats of God) did bring the deluge on the world.

Infidelity did keep the Israelites from entering into Canaan, the type of heaven; as the apostle to the Hebrews doth insist. SERM. I. Heb. iii. 19. iv. 6, &c.

Infidelity indeed is the root of all sin; for did men heartily believe the promises to obedience, and the threats to disobedience, they could hardly be so unreasonable as to forfeit the one, or incur the other: did they believe that the omnipotent, all-wise, most just and severe God, did command and require such a practice, they could hardly dare to omit or transgress.

Let it therefore suffice to have declared the evil of infidelity, which alone is sufficient inducement to avoid it.

SERMON II.

OF THE VIRTUE AND REASONABLENESS OF FAITH.

2 Pet. i. 1.

——*to them that have obtained like precious faith with us.*

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THE holy scripture recommendeth faith (that is, a hearty and firm persuasion concerning the principal doctrines of our religion, from divine revelation taught by our Lord and his apostles) as a most *precious* and *honourable* practice; as a virtue of the first magnitude, very commendable in itself, very acceptable to God, very beneficial to us; having most excellent fruits growing from it, most noble privileges annexed to it, most ample rewards assigned for it.

1 Pet. i. 7.

Heb. xi. 6. John xvi. 27.

It is in a special manner commanded, and obedience to that command is reckoned a prime instance of piety: *This is his commandment, that we should believe; this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*

1 John iii. 23. John vi. 29.

It is the root of our spiritual life; for, *He that cometh to God must believe;* and, *Add to your faith virtue,* saith St. Peter, supposing faith to precede other virtues.

Heb. xi. 6. 2 Pet. i. 5.

It is the principal conduit of divine grace; for By it we are regenerated, and become the sons of God; *Ye all*, saith St. Paul, *are the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* Gal. iii. 26.

By it we *abide in God*, and do *possess* him, saith St. John. John i. 12. 1 Joh. ii. 24. 2 John ix.

By it *Christ dwelleth in us*, saith St. Paul. Eph. iii. 17.

By it we obtain God's Spirit: *Did ye*, saith St. Paul, *receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* Gal. iii. 2, 14. Eph. i. 13. Acts ii. 38. v. 32.

By it we are justified, or acquitted from guilt, and condemnation for sin: for, *Being justified by faith we have peace with God.* John vii. 38. Rom. iii. 25. v. 1. x. 10. Acts xxvi. 18. x. 43.

By it our *hearts are purged*, saith St. Paul; *our souls are purified*, saith St. Peter. Acts xv. 9. 1 Pet. i. 22.

By it we are freed from the dominion of sin; according to that of our Saviour; *If ye abide in my word,—ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.* John viii. 31.

It procureth freedom of access to God; *We have*, saith St. Paul, *boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.* Eph. iii. 12. Heb. x. 22.

It is the *shield*, whereby we *resist* temptations; and the weapon, whereby we *overcome the world.* Eph. vi. 16. 1 Pet. v. 9. 1 John v. 5.

In fine, it is that, which being *retained in a good conscience*, and maintained by virtuous practice, doth keep us in a state of salvation, and will assuredly convey us into eternal life and felicity; for, *by grace we are saved, through faith.* 1 Tim. i. 19. iii. 9. i. 5. Eph. ii. 8. Rom. x. 10. viii. 24. i. 16. Heb. x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 9. Luke viii. 12. Acts xvi. 30, 31.

That faith should be thus highly dignified, hath always appeared strange to the adversaries of our religion[a]; and hath suggested to them matter of 10.

[a] Πίστιν——ἣν διαβάλλουσι, κενὴν καὶ βάρβαρον νομίζοντες Ἕλληνες. Clem. Str. ii. (p. 265.)

Pagani

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obloquy against it; they could not apprehend why we should be commanded, or how we can be obliged to believe; as if it were an arbitrary thing, depending on our free choice, and not rather did naturally follow the representation of objects to our mind: they would not allow that an act of our understanding, hardly voluntary, as being extorted by force of arguments, should deserve such reputation and such recompenses; for if, argued they, a doctrine be propounded with evident and cogent reason, what virtue is there in believing it, seeing a man in that case cannot avoid believing, is therein merely passive, and by irresistible force subdued? if it be propounded without such reason, what fault can it be to refuse assent, or to suspend his opinion about it? can a wise man then do otherwise? is it not in such a case simplicity, or fond credulity, to yield assent? yea, is it not deceit or hypocrisy to pretend the doing so? may not justly then all the blame be charged rather on the incredibility of the doctrine, or the infirmity of reasons enforcing it, than on the incredulity of the person who doth not admit it? whence no philosophers ever did impose such a precept, or did assign to faith a place among the virtues.

Prov. xiv. 15.

To clear this matter, and to vindicate our religion from such misprisions, and that we may be engaged to prize and cherish it; I shall endeavour to declare that Christian faith doth worthily deserve all

Pagani nobis objicere solent, quod religio nostra, quia quasi rationibus deficit, in sola credendi persuasione consistat. *Ruff. in Symb.*

Ἀδίκημα καὶ δικαιοπράγημα ὥρισται τῷ ἑκουσίῳ καὶ ἀκουσίῳ. Arist. Eth. v. 8. iii. 1.

the commendations and the advantages granted thereto: this I shall do by considering its nature and ingredients, its rise and causes, its efficacy and consequences. SERM. II.

I. As to its nature; it doth involve knowledge, knowledge of most worthy and important truths, knowledge peculiar and not otherwise attainable, knowledge in way of great evidence and assurance. Πίστις τῆς εἰς τὸν Θεὸν γνώσεως παρασκευαστική. Chrys. tom. v. Or. 55.

1. [b]Truth is the natural food of our soul, toward which it hath a greedy appetite, which it tasteth with delicious complacency, which being taken in and digested by it doth render it lusty, plump, and active: truth is the special ornament of our mind, decking it with a graceful and pleasant lustre; truth is the proper wealth of reason, whereof having acquired a good stock, it appeareth rich, prosperous, and mighty: what light is without, that is truth within, shining on our inward world, illustrating, quickening, and comforting all things there, exciting all our faculties to action, and guiding them in it. All knowledge therefore, which is the possession of truth, is much esteemed; even that which respecteth objects mean, and little concerning us, (such as human sciences are conversant about; natural appearances, historical events, the properties, proportions, and powers of figure, of motion, of corporeal force,) doth bear a good price, as perfective of rational nature, enriching, adorning, invigorating our mind; whence Aristotle doubteth not upon all those habitual endowments, which so accomplish our understanding, to bestow the name of virtues; that with him being the *virtue of each thing, which any-* Psal. cxix. 142, 151.

[b] Ἀλήθεια δὴ πάντων μὲν ἀγαθῶν θεοῖς ἡγεῖται, πάντων δὲ ἀνθρώποις. Plat. de Leg. v. (p. 481.) de Rep. vi. (p. 675.)

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wise perfecteth it, and disposeth it for action, suitable to its nature. And if ignorance, error, doubt,

Πᾶσα ἀρετὴ, οὗ ἂν ᾖ ἀρετὴ, αὐτό τι εὖ ἴσχον ἀπεργάζεται, καὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ εὖ ἀποδίδωσι. Arist. Eth. ii. 6.

are defects, deformities, infirmities of our soul, then the knowledge which removeth them doth imply the perfection, beauty, and vigour thereof. Faith therefore, as implying knowledge, is valuable.

2. But it is much more so, in regard to the quality of its objects, which are the most worthy that can be, and most useful for us to know; the knowledge whereof doth indeed advance our soul into a better state, doth ennoble, enrich, and embellish our nature; doth raise us to a nearer resemblance with God, and participation of his wisdom; doth infuse purest delight and satisfaction into our hearts; doth qualify and direct us unto practice most conducible to our welfare; it is a knowledge, *enlightening the eyes, converting the soul, rejoicing the heart; sweeter than honey, and the honeycomb; more precious than rubies;* which *giveth to* our head an *ornament of grace*, and *a crown of glory*. For,

Psal. xix. 7, 8, 9, 10. (cxix. 103, 111.) Prov. iii. 15. iv. 9.

Thereby we understand the nature, or the principal attributes of God, of whom only the Christian doctrine doth afford a completely true and worthy character, directive of our esteem, our worship, our obedience, our imitation of him; whereby our demeanour toward him may become him, and please him.

By it we are fully acquainted with the will and intentions of God, relating both to our duty and our recompense; what he requireth from us, and what he designeth for us; upon what terms he will proceed with us in way of grace, of mercy, of justice.

By it we are informed concerning ourselves, what our frame is, whence our original, to what ends we are designed, wherein our felicity doth consist, and how it is attainable. SERM. II.

It enableth us rightly to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong; what is worthy of us, and pleasing to God, what misbecoming us, and offensive to him; both absolutely and comparatively, according to the degrees of each case respectively.

It prescribeth us an exact rule of life, comprising all our duties toward God, our neighbour, ourselves; to observe which will be most decent, and exceedingly profitable to us.

It teacheth us from what principles, and upon what grounds we should act, that our practice should be truly good and laudable.

It proposeth the most valid inducements to virtue, tendering the favour of God and eternal bliss in reward thereof, menacing divine wrath and endless woe upon its neglect.

It discovereth the special aids dispensed to us for the support of our weakness against all temptations and discouragements incident to us through the course of our life.

The knowledge of these things is plainly the top of all knowledge whereof we are capable; not consisting in barren notion, not gratifying idle curiosity, not serving trivial purposes, but really bettering our souls, producing most goodly and wholesome fruits, tending to ends most noble and worthy: this indeed is the highest philosophy; the true culture, and medicine of our soul; the true guide of life, and mistress of action; the mother of all virtues; the best invention of God, and rarest gift of heaven to

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men[c]: for these commendations, by pagan sages ascribed to their philosophy, do in truth solely belong to that knowledge, which by faith we do possess: their philosophy could not reach such truths[d]; it could not so much as aim at some of them; it did but weakly attempt at any: it did indeed pretend to the knowledge of divine and human things, (this being its definition, current among them,) but it had no competent means of attaining either in any considerable measure[e]; for divine things (the nature of him who *dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto;* the intentions of him, who *worketh all things after the counsel of his will;* the *ways of him, which are more discosted from our ways, than heaven from earth;* the *depths of God, which none but his own Spirit can search out,* or discover) do lie beyond the sphere of natural light, and inquisition of our reason: and as for human things, the chief of them have such a connection with divine things, that who were ignorant of the one could nowise descry the other; wherefore those candidates of knowledge, notwithstanding their lofty pretences, were fain to rest in a low form, employing their studies on inferior things, *the obscurity of nature, the subtilty of discourse,* and *moral precepts of life*[f]; such pre-

1 Tim. vi. 16. Eph. i. 11. Isa. lv. 9. 1 Cor. ii. 10. 11.

[c] Cultura animi, *Cic. Tusc.* 1. Medicina animi, *Tusc.* 3. O vitæ philosophia dux, &c. *Tusc.* 5. *de Leg.* 1. *de Fin.* 3. Nec ullum arbitror, ut apud Platonem est, majus aut melius a diis datum munus homini. *Acad.* 1. *Tusc.* 1.

[d] Omnis optimarum rerum cognitio, atque in iis exercitatio philosophia nominatur. *De Orat.* 3.

[e] Οὐκ ἐχέγγυοι διδάσκαλοι περὶ Θεοῦ λέγοντες ἄνθρωποι καθὸ ἄνθρωποι, &c. Clem. Alex. Strom. vi. p. 501.

[f] Philosophia in tres partes distributa est, in naturæ obscuritatem, in disserendi subtilitatem, in vitam atque mores. *Cic. de Or.* 1.

cepts, as their glimmering light and common experience did suggest; for even in points of common morality and prudence human wit can but fumble, as by the great clashing and jangling about them is very notorious. SERM. II.

3. Faith also hath this excellent advantage, that it endueth us with such knowledge in a very clear and sure way, comparable to that whereby the theorems of any science are known; it not being grounded on any slippery deduction of reason, nor on slender conjectures of fancy, nor on musty traditions or popular rumours; but upon the infallible testimony of God, conveyed unto us by powerful evidence, striking all capacities, apt with equal influence to enlighten the simple and to convince the wise. For want of this all human wisdom was so blind and lame; so various, so uncertain; nothing but confusion, unsettlement, and dissatisfaction arising from mere ratiocination; which being destitute of light and aid from heaven, doth ever grope in the dark, doth rove after shadows of truth, is bewildered in mazes of intricacy, wherein things lie involved; whence all philosophy did consist in faint guesses, plausible discourses, and endless disputes about matters of highest consequence, such as the original of the world, the administration of human things, the nature and subsistence of our soul, the way to happiness; none being able about such points to conclude with resolution, or to assert with confidence[g]; so that Acts xvii. 27, 30.

[g] Ὁ μὴ ἐκ πίστεως βοηθούμενος, ἀλλ' οἴκοθεν ἐπὶ τὸν λόγον ἐρχόμενος, ταῖς ἀνθρωπίναις παρασκευαῖς πρὸς τὴν κατάληψιν τῆς ἀληθείας θαῤῥῶν, ψεύστης ἐστι, παραπολὺ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐκπίπτων. Bas. in Isa. xv. Ὅλως δὲ ἡ ἄνευ πίστεως ἐπὶ τὸ λαλεῖν ἐρχομένη ψυχὴ διακενῆς ληρήσει. Ibid.

Hanc

SERM. II. in effect all the philosophers might be ranged under one great sect of *sceptics*, or *seekers*, the most advised and best disposed among them, in result of their most diligent speculations, appearing very doubtful.

2 Pet. i. 19. But we have, as St. Peter saith, βεβαιότερον λόγον, *a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to give heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place*, guiding us in the obscurities and uncertainties

Heb. vi. 19. of life; we have *a hope, as an anchor of the soul both sure and stable*[h]; which stayeth and settleth our mind, being tossed with winds and waves of uncertain cogitations, suggested by different appearances of things.

Hence, as St. Chrysostom is wont to insist, by virtue of faith rustic and mechanic idiots do in true knowledge surpass the most refined wits, and children prove wiser than old philosophers: an idiot can tell us that, which a learned infidel doth not know; a child can assure us that, wherein a deep philosopher is not resolved[i]: for ask a boor, ask a boy educated in our religion, who made him, he will tell you, God Almighty; which is more than Aristotle or Democritus would have told: demand of him why he was

Hanc ego perfectam philosophiam semper judicavi, quæ de maximis quæstionibus copiose posset, ornateque dicere. *Cic. Tusc.* 5. *Vid. in M. Ant. Comm.* p. 143. *Chrys. in Joh. Or.* 63. Οὐδὲν γὰρ οὕτω ποιεῖ σκοτόδινον ὡς ἀνθρώπινος λογισμὸς, ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς πάντα φθεγγόμενος καὶ μὴ ἀνεχόμενος φωτίζεσθαι ἄνωθεν, &c. Chrys. in Joh. Or. 25.

[h] Τὴν ψυχὴν τὴν ἡμετέραν σεσαλευμένην, καὶ περιφερομένην ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν λογισμῶν ἀσθενείας, &c. Chrys. tom. v. Orat. 55.

[i] Τίς οὐκ ἂν αὐτόθεν μάθοι τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν, ἢ τοὺς ἀγραμμάτους καὶ ἰδιώτας τῶν μέγα ἐπὶ σοφίᾳ κομπαζόντων τοσούτῳ σοφωτέρους ἀπέδειξεν, ὅσῳ τῶν μικρῶν παιδίων τοὺς ἔμφρονας ἄνδρας ὑπερέχοντάς ἐστιν ἰδεῖν, &c. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 19.

made, he will answer you, to serve and glorify his Maker; and hardly would Pythagoras or Plato have replied so wisely: examine him concerning his soul, he will aver, that it is immortal, that it shall undergo a judgment after this life, that accordingly it shall abide in a state of bliss or misery everlasting; about which points neither Socrates nor Seneca could assure any thing: inquire of him how things are upheld, how governed and ordered, he presently will reply, by the powerful hand and wise providence of God; whereas among philosophers one would ascribe all events to the current of fate, another to the tides of fortune; one to blind influences of stars, another to a confused jumble of atoms; pose him about the main points of morality and duty; and he will in few words better inform you than Cicero, or Epictetus, or Aristotle, or Plutarch, in their large tracts and voluminous discourses about matters of that nature. SERM. II. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 61. (p.633.)

So real a property it is of God's law *to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion;* so true it is, that our Lord affirmeth of himself, *I came a light into the world, that he who believeth in me may not abide in darkness;* so justly doth St. Paul affirm concerning divine revelation, that *it is able to make a man wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus;* being *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* This is that highway of holiness, of which the prophet saith, *the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.* Thus is faith in its nature honourable. Prov. i. 4. Psal. xix. 7. cxix. 9, 100, 130. John xii. 46. viii. 12. 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17. Is. xxxv. 8.

II. It hath also divers ingredients, or inseparable

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adjuncts, which it doth imply, rendering it commendable and acceptable to God. As,

1. Faith implieth a good use of reason. This is that which commendeth any virtue, that a man acting after it, doth act wisely, in conformity to the frame and design of his nature, or like a rational creature; using his best faculties in the best manner, and in their proper operations toward the end intended by the all-wise Creator: this is that, upon which all dispensation of justice is founded, a man being accountable for the use of his reason, so as to deserve reward for the right management, and punishment for the misuse thereof; this is that consequently, whereon God so often declareth himself to ground his judgment; so that in effect he will justify men for being wise, and condemn them as guilty of folly; whence in the holy style wisdom, and virtue or piety, are terms equivalent; and a fool doth signify the same with a vicious or impious person. And if ever a man deserveth commendation for well using his reason, it is then, when upon mature deliberation he doth embrace the Christian doctrine; for so doing is a most rational act, arguing the person to be sagacious, considerate, and judicious; one, who doth carefully inquire into things, doth seriously weigh the case, doth judge soundly about it.

Πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐρθὸν, τοῦτο ἁμάρτημά ἐστι. &c. Clem. Alex. Paed. i. 13.

Deut. iv. 6. xxxii. 29. Ps. cxi. 10. Job xxviii. 28. Prov. i. 7, 9, 10.

It was a foul aspersion cast upon our religion by its ancient opposers, that it did require ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν, *a mere belief, void of reason*[k]; challenging assent to its doctrines without any trial or proof.

[k] Μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευσον. Orig. in Cels. (p. 84.)

Πίστευσον, εἰ σωθῆναι θέλεις, ἢ ἄπιθι. Id. in Cels. vi. (p. 282.)

Ὁ ταῦτα πιστεύσας οὐχ ἁπλῶς οὐδὲ ἀλόγως, ἀλλὰ κρίσει καὶ πληροφορίᾳ χάρισμα εἴληφεν ἐκ Θεοῦ. Const. Apost. viii. 1.

This suggestion, if true, were, I confess, a mighty prejudice against it, and no man indeed justly could be obliged to admit it upon such terms: but it is really a gross calumny; such a proceeding being disclaimed by the teachers and advocates of our religion, being repugnant to the nature and tenor thereof; being prejudicial to its interest and design; being contrary to its use and practice[1]. Never any religion was indeed so little liable to the censure of obtruding itself on men's credulity, none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to scan and sift its pretences; yea provoked them for its sake and their own, upon most important considerations, (at the peril of their souls, as they tendered their own best advantage,) to a fair, discreet, careful examination thereof. Other religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of ancestors, custom and prescription of times, large extent and prevalence among crews of people, establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers, (arguments extrinsical, and of small validity in any case,) declining all other test and verdict of reason: but our religion confideth in itself, and the pure merit of its cause; and therefore warneth men, in a case of such moment, laying aside all prejudice, to employ their best understandings on an industrious and impartial search of the truth; referring the decision and result, so far as concerneth each particular man, to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with

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Εὐγνώμων ἐξέτασις. Orig.

Lact. ii. 6.

Lact. ii. 7.

[1] Δέχεσθε, φησὶν, ἁπλῶς τὰ λεγόμενα, καὶ μηδεὶς ἐξεταζέτω τι πρέπον ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ τι ἀπρεπές· καὶ πίστιν ὀνομάζει τὴν ἀβασάνιστον ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀστάτοις καὶ ἀναποδείκτοις ἐπὶ βλάβῃ συγκατάθεσιν. Athan. tom. ii. p. 325. de Arianis.

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It indeed ordinarily doth refuse a sudden and precipitate assent, admitting no man, capable of judging and choosing for himself, to the participation of it, or to the name and privileges of a worthy believer, until after a competent time and opportunities of instruction, he can approve himself to understand it well, and doth avow himself to be cordially persuaded of its truth.

Such is its method, and it hath not any need of other; God having provided and exhibited arguments abundantly sufficient to convince any man of its truth, who is not affectedly blind and stupid, or wantonly slothful and careless, or frowardly stiff and obstinate.

What indeed better arguments (considering the nature of the objects which faith respecteth, being things spiritual and invisible; considering also the capacities of persons concerned, being all sorts of people, wise and simple, learned and rude) could we have, or could we need, than the conspicuous excellency and usefulness of the doctrine, approving itself to the mind, and confirming itself by palpable experience of most happy fruits, springing from a prac-
1 Pet. i. 10. tice conformable thereto; than its exact correspondence to manifold ancient presignifications and pre-
Heb. ii. 4. dictions concerning it; than special attestations of
Acts iv. 33. xix. 20. God thereto, not only by audible voices, and visible apparitions from heaven, but also by innumerable miraculous works; than the concurrence of Divine Providence in strange methods to the propagation and maintenance of it; than the blessings and consolations, attending a faithful observance of it? what

subtilty of discourse, what charm of eloquence could serve to evince and impress the great truths concerning the attributes, providence, will, commands, and promises of God[m]; concerning the immortal subsistence of our soul, the future judgment, the everlasting rewards hereafter, with such evidence and such force, to the common and vulgar reason, or indeed to any reason of man, as do these plain arguments, needing no reach of wit or depth of judgment to sound their meaning, or feel their strength? SERM. II. John vii. 17. Acts v. 32.

But if any man be too wise to be pleased with such downright and easy ways of conviction, reason itself, well followed, would lead him hither, and serve to produce faith in him; for that there is a God, reason from observation of appearances in nature and providence will collect; that goodness is one of his principal attributes, reason from the same grounds will infer; that God hath an especial regard to men will thence also become notorious; that consequently God will vouchsafe his guidance to men in their way toward happiness, will appear reasonable to conceive; that God hath not done this in any other way, reason, comparing and weighing things, will easily discern; that Christian doctrine may fairly pretend thereto, reason soon will admit; so hath reason led us to the door of faith, and being arrived thither, will (if our will be not averse) easily find entrance.

Hence God doth not only allow, but enjoin us to use our best reason in judging of this doctrine, whe-

[m] Τί ἀναγκαστικώτερον εἰς συγκατάθεσιν, εἰπέ μοι, προτάσεων πλοκαὶ καὶ συμπέρασμα ἀκόλουθον ἑαυτοῖς ἐφελκόμεναι, ἢ θαῦμα τοσοῦτον ἐνεργῶς ῥώμενον, πᾶσαν ἀνθρώπου δύναμιν ὑπερβαῖνον. Bas. in Psal. cxv.

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ther it be from him, and worthy of our acceptance; he doth not bid us to retire into the dark, to shut our eyes, or to wink, when we receive it; but charg-
John iii. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 9. Acts xxvi. 18. eth us to go into the clearest light; to open our eyes wide, to view it thoroughly with our best senses and sharpest attention, before we do yield our consent and approbation to it: his precepts are, that
1 Thess. v. 21. *we examine all things, and hold fast that which is*
1 John iv. 1. *good*; that we *believe not every spirit*, (or revelation pretended,) but *try the spirits, whether they*
Matt. xxiv. 4. *be of God*; that we stand on our guard, and *take*
Eph. v. 6. *heed that no man deceive us*; that we *be not fools*,
15, 17. 1 Cor. xiv. 20. nor *children in understanding*; but *wise*, and *per-*
Eph. v. 10. *fect men*; that we *compare things different*, and
Rom. xii. 2. *try what is well-pleasing to God*; that we be *al-*
1 Cor. x. 15. Rom. i. 18. *ways ready with meekness and modesty to render*
Phil. i. 10. 1 Pet. iii. 15. *unto every man demanding it an account of the hope in us.*

He therefore doth expostulate with men for their dulness, their incogitancy, their sluggishness, their
Luke xxiv. 45. folly, as the causes of their unbelief; declaring that in respect to such defaults, wilfully incurred, he will
John xii. 48. proceed to condemn it; *He*, saith our Lord, *that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken,*
John x. 37. xv. 22, 24. *the same shall judge him in the last day*; and, *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; If I had not come and spoken unto them——if I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin.* Our Lord, we see, did not urge his bare authority, or exact a faith without ground; but he claimeth it as due upon two most rational accounts; his convincing discourses, and his unparalleled works; which from

ny well advised and well disposed person could SERM.
ot but win belief, that he was *a teacher sent from* II.
God.

Indeed, if we seriously do weigh the case, we John vii. 46.
hall find, that to require faith without reason is to iii. 2.
emand an impossibility; for faith is an effect of
ersuasion, and persuasion is nothing else but the
pplication of some reason to the mind, apt to draw
orth its assent; no man therefore can believe he
noweth not what or why: he that truly believeth,
ust apprehend the proposition, and he must dis-
ern its connection with some principle of truth,
hich as more notorious to him he before doth ad-
it; otherwise he doth only pretend to believe, out
f some design, or from affection to some party; his
aith is not so much really faith, as hypocrisy, craft,
ondness, or faction.

God therefore neither doth nor can enjoin us faith
ithout reason; but therefore doth require it, as
atter of duty, from us, because he hath furnished
fficient reason to persuade us; and having made
is doctrine credible, (*a faithful*, or credible, *word*, 1 Tim. i. 15.
nd worthy of all acceptation;) having given us
eason chiefly to be employed in such matters, as he
ustly may claim our assent, so he will take well
ur ready surrendry of it to him, as an act of reason
nd wisdom becoming us.

To yield unto reason fairly proposed and proved
s in any case a laudable quality, signifying that a
an hath his reason to purpose, that he is guided
nd governed thereby, not by humour or fancy;
ualifying him for conversation and business, for
hich nothing rendereth a man more unfit than hu-
orous incredulity, or obstinacy against reason. It

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is especially commendable in these cases, concerning our better part and final state, arguing a man to be sober and advised, affording regard to things best deserving it, employing his consideration in due place, being faithful and just to himself, in attending to his main concernments.

2. Faith implieth a compliance with the providence and grace of God; with his providence framing the economy of things to be believed, discovering it to the world by special revelation, furnishing motives apt to work faith, dispensing opportunities of knowledge leading thereto; with his grace operating in our souls, by illustration of our minds to discern, attraction of our wills to embrace, inclination of our affections to relish and like the heavenly truths exhibited to us.

There is no man to whom means are not administered, sufficient to produce in him that measure of faith, which is requisite toward the good management of his life, and his rendering an account for it at God's tribunal; there is no man also, to whom such means are afforded, whom the grace of

1 Tim. ii. 4. God, who *desireth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*, doth not in some degree excite to the due improvement of them; but in effect the case is varied, because some men do embrace those means, and comply with that grace, while others do reject or neglect them.

John vi. 45. Job xxxiii. 16. Zech. vii. 11. Ezek. iii. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 4. Acts vii. 57. Job xxxiii. 14. xxi. 14.

Our Lord saith, that *every one, who hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, doth come unto him:* but some there are, to whom the Father speaketh, yet they *stop their ears, and refuse to hear;* some do hear in a sort, but do not learn, ill prejudices or depraved affections barring instruction

own their mind; being like those of whom the apostle saith, *The word heard did not profit them, being not mingled with faith in those which heard* Heb. iii. 7, 15. iv. 2. SERM. II.

No man, saith our Lord again, *can come unto me except the Father draw him:* but this attraction is not compulsory; we may hold back; we may withstand it, and not follow. John vi. 44. v. 40. Matt. xxii. 3. Luke xiii. 34.

Faith, saith St. Paul, *is a gift of God*, and *a favour granted to us*; ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, *To you*, saith he, *hath been graciously vouchsafed not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him*; and, *To you*, saith our Lord, *it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven:* but this gift is not always accepted, this favour is not always entertained; God doth not so obtrude it on us, but that we may reject or decline it. Eph. ii. 8. Phil. i. 29. (Eph. i. 17, 18.) Matt. xiii. 11.

Faith is *a fruit of God's Spirit*; but such as will not grow in a bad soil, not purged from weeds of corrupt prejudice, of vicious affection, of worldly care; which will not thrive without good care and culture. Gal. v. 22. Matt. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. xii. 3, 9. 1 John ii. 20. iv. 2. 2 Cor. iv. 13. v. 20.

God inviteth us to believe by the promulgation of his gospel, and exhortation of his ministers; he declareth abundant reason to persuade us; he representeth to our minds the beauty of Christian truth and virtue; he speaketh from without unto us by manifold arguments, able, if we are not very stupid, to convince us; he speaketh within by strong impressions on our consciences, apt, if we are not very stubborn, to subdue us; *Behold*, saith he, *I stand at the door, and knock: if any man will hear my voice, and will open the door, I will come in unto him:* such is the case; God standeth at the door of Rev. iii. 20.

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our heart by the ministry of his word, he knocketh at it by the impulse of his grace; but to hear is the work of our vigilance, to open is an act of our voluntary compliance.

2 Cor. iv. 6. Eph. i. 17, 18. *God*, saith St. Paul, *who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;* God shineth upon us by revelation of his truth, God shineth into us by illumination of his Spirit; the which through the ear doth convey the light of truth unto the heart: but we may by wilful obstruction exclude that light, shutting the windows of our heart against it; we may there quench it by foul affections, we may smother it in fogs of evil prejudice; we may dissipate it by troublesome cares; we may, by affected blindness, or drowsy negligence, render it indiscernible, or ineffectual to us; like those, of whom the apostle there saith, that *the god of this world had blinded the minds of those which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

2 Cor. iii. 14. ἐπωρώθη τὰ νοήματα. 2 Cor. iv. 4.

Acts xiii. 46. A man may ἀπωθεῖσθαι τὸν λόγον, *thrust away the word*, as it is said of the Jews; he may, as others of the same stamp did, *resist the Spirit;* he may, as those worldlings in the gospel, let the seed *fall beside* him, or not *fall deep* into him, or *fall into thorns*, which may *choke it;* he may *hate the light*, and therefore *not come unto it;* or *rebel against it*, as those did in Job; he may, as the Pharisees did, *defeat the counsels*, and *cross the desires of God.*

Acts vii. 51. Matt. xiii. 4, &c. John iii. 20. i. 5. Job xxiv. 13. Luke vii. 30. Matt. xxiii. 37.

And as to deal thus with God's word and providence, thus to treat his Spirit and grace, is heinously criminal, so to use them well is very acceptable to

God's goodness: if we yield due regard to his providence, and an obsequious ear to his word; if we cheerfully do accept his gifts, and close with his overtures of mercy; if we concur with his motions, and further his gracious designs, he will take it kindly of us; as therein acting becomingly toward him, and gratifying him in that wherein he most delighteth, which is the procurement of our good. SERM. II.

3. Faith doth imply good opinion of God, and good actions toward him.

God our parent hath stamped on our nature some lineaments of himself, whereby we resemble him; he hath implanted in our soul some roots of piety toward him; into our frame he hath inserted some propensions to acknowledge him, and to affect him; the which are excited and improved by observing the manifest footsteps of divine power, wisdom, and goodness, which occur in the works of nature and providence; to preserve and cherish these is very commendable; a man thereby keeping the precious relics of the divine image from utter defacement, retaining somewhat of his primitive worth and integrity; declaring that by ill usage he hath not quite shattered or spoiled his best faculties and inclinations. Τὸ φυσικὸν φίλτρον πρὸς τὸν κτίσαντα. Orig.

Now that he who believeth hath thus managed himself, so as to have preserved in his soul those seeds of piety, apt to conspire with the influences of grace drawing to belief, doth appear from hence, that faith doth include an assent to divers points, so thwarting our carnal sense and gust, that without a good esteem of God, and good affection toward him, we hardly could admit them; *the carnal mind*, or brutish part within us, being, as St. Paul saith, *en-* Rom. viii. 7.

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mity to God, and *uncapable of submission to his law;* the *sensual man being not able to receive the things of God, for they are foolishness to him;* to balance which repugnance and indisposition there must be some good notions and good affections in the mind, disposing it to comply with the revelation of truth and operation of grace.

1 Cor. ii. 14.

There can hardly be any greater instance of respect and love toward any person, than a ready yielding of assent to his words, when he doth aver things to our conceit absurd or incredible; than resting on his promise, when he seemeth to offer things impossible, or strangely difficult; than embracing his advice, when he recommendeth things very cross to our interest, humour, and pleasure; whence Abraham's faith (expressed in hoping for a son in his decrepit age, and in offering up that son, who was so dear to him, who was *the heir of promise,* the prop of his family and hope) is so magnified, as an argument of exceeding respect and affection toward God: *Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God;* it was a great evidence of his friendship, that *against hope he believed in hope, being fully persuaded that what God had promised, he was able to perform;* and therefore *it was imputed to him for righteousness;* or accepted by God, as a signal act of goodness, whereby he did testify his immoveable opinion concerning the power, fidelity, and benignity of God, together with answerable good-will toward him.

Jam. ii. 23. Rom. iv. 18, 21, 22. Heb. xi. 19. 11.

And many things doth the Christian doctrine propose, apt to try such a friendship; many a *hard saying* doth it assert, which a profane mind can

hardly swallow or digest; there is indeed scarce any article of faith, at which we shall not boggle; any matter of duty, which we shall not start at, any promise of God, whereat we shall not stagger, if we be not seasoned with favourable apprehensions and inclinations toward him, who recommendeth them to us, as endued with those attributes which secure their credibility. SERM. II.

That God Almighty should erect this stately fabric of heaven and earth, decked with so rich and goodly furniture, with especial regard to man, so puny and mean a creature, whom he foresaw so ready to offend and wrong him; that upon his foul misdemeanour God should not withdraw his gracious protection and care from him, but thence should take occasion of designing and capacitating him for a state far more happy than that whence he had lapsed, making his punishment a benefit, and his deserved death a gate of immortality; that for the redemption of him, continuing in apostasy and rebellious enmity, God should please to send down out of his bosom, from the height of glory and blessedness, his own dearest Son, to partake the baseness and infirmity of our flesh, to endure the inconveniences and troubles incident to our condition, to undergo a most painful and ignominious death for the expiation of our offences; these are mysteries, to which we should not easily give credence, did we not conceive God immensely good and gracious.

That God could not pitch on more compendious and commodious ways of expressing his goodness and mercy, we hardly should admit, if we did not take him to be transcendently wise, far beyond our reach and comprehension. Eph. iii. 8. ἀνεξιχνίαστος πλοῦτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

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That Jesus, a man in appearance like to ourselves; of mean parentage, of poor estate, who lived as a beggar and a vagrant, who died as a malefactor and a slave, in semblance forlorn to God and man, should be the Lord of life and glory, the general Author of salvation, the Judge of all men, the King of all the world, is a point which cannot but appear very strange, very scandalous to minds not imbued with special reverence of the divine power and wisdom.

That God, who is so perfectly holy, so exactly just, so extremely displeased with iniquity, should yet bear so patiently, and so easily pardon, enormous transgressions against himself; that he should accept so mean services, and to so slight performances should dispense so precious rewards, who would believe, that is not possessed with conceptions of his admirable clemency and bounty?

That God one day will raise the dead, re-collecting our scattered dust, and rearing our dissolved frame, we should not easily grant, had we not a strong opinion of God's power, and that *nothing is too hard for him* to accomplish.

That to deny ourselves in all ways, to *hate our own souls*, to take up a cross, to forsake kindred and friends, to quit houses and lands, *to renounce all that we have*, to reject the profits, the honours, the delights of the world, to cut off our right hands, to pluck out our right eyes, to mortify our members, and crucify our flesh, to be dead to the world, to expose our lives unto greatest dangers, yea to sacrifice them unto certain loss, are often things very good, most advisable and eligible, how could we be ever induced to conceive, if we did not take God to be most wise, who hath prescribed such

duties; most faithful, who hath engaged to satisfy us for the discharge of them; most able fully to requite us for the pains and damages which we sustain in such practice? SERM. II.

That the methods of Providence should be so intricate and unaccountable; that the passage to happiness should be so rough, and that to misery so smooth; that He who disposeth all things, should to those whom he most liketh and loveth dispense temptations, crosses, disgraces, all kinds of hardship and sorrow; permitting those whom he disapproveth and detesteth to live without interruption in quiet, splendour, and jollity; would stumble one, who hath not entertained a general assurance concerning the wisdom and equity of God.

Faith, therefore, in most of its chief parts, doth imply him that owneth it to be well conceited and well affected toward his Maker; thereby avowing his most glorious perfections, the which do assure the truth of his word and doctrine; *He*, saith our Lord, *that hath received my testimony hath set his seal that God is true;* that is, most evidently he doth signify his opinion of God's veracity and fidelity, together with the divine perfections requisite to make them good; for be (saith the believer in his mind) the proposition never so uncouth to my apprehension, yet God is true who affirmeth it; be the duty never so harsh to my sense, yet God is wise and good who appointeth it; be the promise never so unlikely in appearance to find effect, yet God is faithful and able to perform it: and he that is thus disposed in judgment and affection toward God, no wonder if his demeanour be very acceptable to him. John iii. 33.

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Thus is faith precious, considering its nature, and those essential ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth include or imply. It will also appear to be so, if we consider its rise, and those good dispositions, which concur in its production.

1 Thess. v. 6.

III. 1. To the engendering of faith there is required a mind sober, composed, and wakeful; ready to observe what befalleth, apt to embrace what is offered, conducible to our good and advantage; a mind not so drowned in worldly care, sensual enjoyment, or impertinent sport, as to oversee or neglect the concerns of our better part, and eternal state.

Deut. xxix. 4. Matt. xiii. 9. xi. 15. Rev. ii. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 1. Job xiii. 17. Isa. xxxii. 3. xxxv. 5. Prov. xxiii. 12. ii. 10. iv. 1, 20. vii. 24.

That we may believe, we must have *eyes to see*, and *ears to hear*, and *a heart to understand;* we must attentively look with our eyes, we must *incline our ears to God's word*, we must *apply our heart to instruction.*

Thus in the apostolical history we may observe, that when the apostles, in a manner apt to stir any man, being awake, to remark, did propose their doctrine, some readily did yield their ears and hearts to their discourse; while others did not mind or regard it.

2. Faith doth require much diligence and industry. We must have the patience to give God the hearing, carefully attending to what is propounded; as it is said of Lydia, that she did προσέχειν, *attend to the words spoken by St. Paul;* and δεῖ περισσοτέρως προσέχειν, *we must*, saith the apostle to the Hebrews, *yield extraordinary attention to the things heard;* we must, as our Saviour warneth, let the evangelical *word sink down into our ears:* we must take

1 Tim. iv. 13. Acts xvi. 14. Heb. ii. 1. Luke ix. 44.

he pains to consider the notions, and to weigh the reasons enforcing them; as the Bereans did, who lid ἀνακρίνειν τὰς γραφὰς, *examine the scriptures, whether those things were so,* as St. Paul did teach out of them. We must ἐνδείκνυσθαι τὴν σπουδὴν, *exert and demonstrate that studious care,* which is requisite to get a clear knowledge and firm persuasion oncerning the points of belief; for *he that received he seed into the good ground,* was ὁ τὸν λόγον ἀκούων καὶ συνιὼν, *he that heard the word, and did understand it,* or well consider it; God for this reason loth lay his truth not so open, or obvious, that we nay be somewhat exercised, and put to use a pious liligence in finding it; it lieth under the surface, hat we may delve for it; *searching the scriptures,* veighing reasons, comparing things.

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Acts xvii. 11. Heb. vi. 11, 12. iv. 11. σπουδάσωμεν εἰσελθεῖν. Matt. xiii. 23. John v. 39.

3. Faith must needs proceed from sincerity, and oundness of judgment.

The assent, which upon contemplation and conidering of things we do yield to them, is usually ermed judgment; and it much resembleth that act, vhose name it borroweth: for as he is a good judge, vho after a full cognizance, and careful discussion of the case with its pleas, doth pronounce freely and airly, being no way swayed either by his own inlination, or by temptation from without; who is ot biassed by any previous affection or dislike, not lrawn by favour, not daunted by fear, not bribed y profit, not charmed by flattery, not dazzled by pecious appearance, not gulled by crafty insinuations r by fine speech, not tired by solicitation or importunity, not seduced by precedents or custom; not erverted by any such means, which are indirect, mpertinent, or extrinsecal to the cause, so as to give

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a wrong sentence; so is he that assenteth to Christian truth: many considerations will exempt him from any suspicion of being anywise so corrupted.

John vii. 24. μὴ κρίνετε κατ' ὄψιν.

For the gospel cometh under trial in a guise nowise plausible or advantageous to human conceit: its garb and circumstances are nowise taking, or attractive of any favour to it; but such rather, as are apt to raise dislike and scandal against it; it being, as St. Paul saith, presented up *in earthen vessels*, in a way very homely and contemptible. It representeth a mean, a poor, a persecuted, a crucified man offering salvation, and claiming obedience; attended by persons of like condition and fortune, urging the same overtures and pretences upon us: and what impression is such an appearance likely to work upon our fancy, which is prone to affect splendid and pompous shows?

2 Cor. iv. 7. Gal. iv. 13.

1 Cor. ii. 3.

The same doth not present to us any bribe of gain, doth not tempt us with any hope of preferment, doth not allure us with any bait of pleasure; but challengeth a free sentence; and that such an one, which may greatly prejudice our worldly interests, may spoil our profit, may stop our preferment, may dash all our pleasure; *In the world ye shall have tribulation: We must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of God: Every one that will live godlily in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* Such are the promises and enticements it useth.

John xvi. 33. xvii. 14. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 21. 2 Tim. iii. 12. 1 Thess. iii. 3. Phil. i. 29. Eph. iii. 13. Matt. xvi. 24. x. 38.

Neither doth it soothe or court us by glozing speech, so as to recommend itself to our fancies by raising in us a good conceit of ourselves; but dealeth bluntly and coarsely with us; faithfully and plainly ac-

quainting us with our own case, involved in its cause; how grievous sinners we be, how obnoxious to justice we stand; how worthless we are, how wretched we shall be, secluding that mercy and grace of God, which it tendereth upon its own terms, of confessing our guilt, disclaiming our merit, humbly seeking mercy, forsaking our own ways, and submitting to God's will. SERM. II.

It doth not solicit us in trim language, nor by sly insinuations doth inveigle us to embrace it; but in downright terms, in a plain dress of speech, in a resolute strain doth charge us, upon our peril, to do it right, denouncing upon our refusal extremities of wrath and vengeance.

It advanceth pleas against the bent of our temper, which ever is prone to things forbidden, and averse from things enjoined by it: against the prejudices of our mind, which is always apt to approve or to admire things which it condemneth or vilifieth; to dislike or despise things which it commendeth and magnifieth: against the affections of our heart, the dearest objects of whose love, delight, and care it would discard and drive from us; the most unwelcome and disgustful things whereto, it would introduce and bring to us: against our strongest appetites, and most earnest passions; the violent motions of which it doth curb and check; doth quell, or doth allay: against many temptations, potently drawing us to things from which it reclaimeth, stoutly driving us from things which it recommendeth: against the stream of habitual usage, and the torrent of common example, things so prevalent upon us: in fine, against ourselves, such as we naturally are, such as we by education and custom are made; whom it impeacheth of heinous guilt and enormous folly; whose conceit

SERM. II. and credit it debaseth; whom it depresseth into the confines of hell and misery: all within us, all about us, do with might and main oppose it; our lust, our fancy, our honour, our interest, our reputation, our principles, our customs, our friends, our enemies; the flesh, the world, the Devil, all combinedly are so many fierce adversaries, so many shrewd advocates, so many clamorous solicitors against its cause.

He therefore, who notwithstanding all these disadvantages determineth in favour of it, must assuredly be a very upright, impartial, and incorrupt judge; declaring his sense purely according to the dictates of his reason and conscience.

What indeed greater integrity can a man express, than in thus deciding a cause referred to him so much against himself, as he is naturally affected, and standeth related to things here? What greater equity can he shew, than in avowing so harsh, so rough, so unpleasing truths, so little gratifying his own sense or fancy, so little favouring his profit or pleasure? What greater ingenuity can there be, than to espouse that doctrine which pincheth our liberty within so narrow bounds; which layeth such restraints upon our thoughts, our words, our actions; which interdicteth to us so many enjoyments, which exacteth from us so great pains?

4. To the begetting faith there must concur humility, or a readiness to entertain sober and moderate opinions of ourselves, together with suitable affections and desires; for he that with hearty persuasion and serious resolution embraceth Christianity, doth thereby stoop to many things very cross to the vain conceit, the proud humour, and haughty stomach of man.

The first step into the Christian state is a sight and

sense of our own imperfection, weakness, baseness, and misery: we must discern and feel, that our mind is very blind, and our reason very feeble; that our will is very impotent, lame, depraved, prone to evil, and averse from good; that our life is void of merit, and polluted with guilt; that our condition is deplorably sad and wretched; that of ourselves we are insufficient to think or do any good, in order to our recovery or deliverance; whence we are obliged to sore compunction of spirit for our deeds and our case, to humble confession of our sins and miseries, to earnest supplication for mercy and grace, to heal and rescue us from our sad estate: *Lord have mercy on me, a sinner: What shall I do to be saved? Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?* Such are the ejaculations of a soul teeming with faith.

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2 Cor. iii. 5.

Luke xviii. 13. Acts xvi. 30. Rom. vii. 24. Naz. Or. xxvi. p. 454.

He that entereth into the faith, must therewith entirely submit his understanding, and resign his judgment to God, as his master and guide; being ready to believe whatever God declareth, however to his seeming unintelligible or incredible; to follow whither God conducteth, although like Abraham he *knoweth not whither he goeth;* to approve that which God ordaineth, however distasteful to his sense; to undertake that which God requireth, however difficult; to bear that which God imposeth, how burdensome soever; being content that Divine wisdom shall absolutely sway and reign over his wisdom; that his reason shall be puzzled, shall be baffled in many cases; that his mind shall be rifled of all its prejudices, its fond curiosities, its presumptuous confidences, of *every thought and device* advancing itself against divine truth.

Heb. xi. 8. Οὐκ ἐπιστάμενός που ἔρχεται.

2 Cor. x. 5.

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He must abandon all good opinion of himself, all conceitedness of his own worth, merit, excellency, felicity in any kind; slighting his wealth, his power, his dignity, his wit, his wisdom, and the like advantages natural or secular, which are so much prized in vulgar and worldly esteem; as things in themselves of no consideration, nor otherwise valuable than as talents intrusted by God, or instruments of his service; disowning them from himself, as things freely dispensed by God, and absolutely depending on his disposal: saying with St. Paul, *Yea doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.*

Phil. iii. 8, 9.

He also that cordially doth embrace the Christian doctrine, with resolution of conforming his practice thereto, must look for it to sustain much disgrace; to be hated, to be censured and taxed, to be slighted and scorned, to be reproached, to be spurned as a fool, an idiot, a humourist, a silly, superstitious, fantastical, morose body, by the world, and the adherents to its corrupt principles, its vicious fashions, its depraved sentiments and practices; *who will wonder* (with indignation and scorn) *at those who do not run into the same excess of riot, speaking evil* and railing *at them;* especially in times when wickedness *doth lift up its horn*, when profaneness doth not only much prevail, but doth insult and vapour over piety.

John xv. 18, 19.

1 Pet. iv. 4. βλασφημοῦντες.

Every Christian as such immediately doth admit

notions quite debasing high conceit, which ascribe all our good things purely to Divine bounty, which allow us to own nothing but evils springing from our defects, infirmities, and corruptions, from our guilty naughtiness and folly; which display our great imperfection, indigency, impotency, ignorance, error, unworthiness, and forlorn wretchedness; which assure that we do subsist in total dependence upon God, continually needing his protection, succour, and mercy. SERM. II.

He must undertake the practice of duties extremely cross to proud humour; to comport with injuries and affronts, without revenge, without resentment of them; to place himself beneath others; to be content with his state, how mean and poor soever; to bear patiently all events incident to him, however sad and grievous; with the like, contrary to the gust of a proud heart.

He that doth thus demean himself, embracing such notions, and complying with such duties, how can he otherwise than be a very humble, sober, and modest person?

5. To faith much fortitude, much resolution, and courage must conspire: for he that firmly persuadeth himself to be a Christian, doth embark in a most difficult and dreadful warfare, doth undertake most high and hazardous enterprises, doth engage in the boldest adventures that a man can set upon; he intendeth to encounter most puissant, stout, and fierce enemies; to fight many a bloody battle; to attack many a strong hold, to sustain many a sharp brunt, to endure many sore hardships, to run into many terrible dangers, to break through many tough difficulties, to surmount many great discouragements, impediments, and oppositions.

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He doth set himself in array against the world, the flesh, and the Devil, that strong confederacy bandied against him with their utmost force of strength and subtilty.

1 John v. 4.

Eph. ii. 2. iv. 22. Rom. xii. 2. 1 Cor. vii. 31. 2 Pet. i. 4.

He must combat the world, by its fair looks, flatteries, and caresses, enticing to sin; by its frowns, menaces, and rough treatments, deterring from duty; ensnaring us by its profits, its glories, its pleasures; seducing us by its bad customs and examples; distracting us with its cares and amusements of business.

He must cope with the flesh, that intestine and treacherous foe; which with its corrupt prejudices and imaginations, with its stubborn proclivities, with its impetuous appetites, with its boisterous passions, doth *war against our soul, striving to bring our minds into captivity under the law of sin, which is in our members.*

1 Pet. ii. 11. Rom. vii. 23.

Eph. vi. 12. 1 Pet. v. 8, 9. Eph. vi. 11. iv. 12. 2 Cor. ii. 11.

He must *grapple with* the Devil, that *strong one*, that *greedy lion*, that *wily snake*, that rueful *dragon*, always waiting to surprise us, always gaping to devour us, always laying close trains to entrap us, always throwing *fiery* darts of temptation, to consume or scorch us; *Our wrestling*, as the apostle doth express it, *is against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickednesses in high places.*

Eph. vi. 12.

In these conflicts he must expect to meet with many a grievous repulse, to bear many a hard knock, to feel many a sore wound; to be often beat back, often knocked down, often thrust through, often trampled on, and insulted over.

To set on these things is surely the highest gallantry that can be; he that hath the heart to at-

tempt and undergo such things, is a daring and brave man indeed; he that successfully can achieve such exploits is truly a hero; most deserving notable trophies, and everlasting monuments of renown. SERM. II.

The undertakings of Alexander, of Hannibal, of Cæsar, did not signify valour like to this; their achievements were but toys in comparison to these: those famous gallants would have found it infinitely harder to conquer the world in this way; to have subdued their lusts, and mastered their passions, would have proved far more difficult, than to get advantage in scuffles with armed men; to discomfit legions of devils, would have been to them another kind of work, than was the vanquishing squadrons of Persians, of Gauls, of Romans: to have set upon their own ambition and vanity, their intemperance, their revenge; to have quelled those inward enemies; to have sustained affronts, disgraces, afflictions, with a calm and contented mind, would have more tried their courage, than all which they attempted; making a great show, but signifying little of true fortitude.

6. The noble virtue of patience is likewise accessary to faith; thereto all kinds of patience must concur; patience of labour in God's service, and obedience to all his commands; *patience of hope*, in waiting for the accomplishment of God's pleasure; patience of persecution for God's sake, and in conscience of our duty to him; patience of crosses and afflictions by God's disposal allotted to us for our instruction, our exercise, our probation, our correction, and improvement in goodness. For, 1 Thess. i. 3.

Christianity is the great school and special academy of patience, wherein we are informed, are Heb. v. 8.

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inured, are trained up and tried to bear all things: the cross is the badge of our profession, without willingly carrying which, we cannot be the children of God or disciples of Christ; whereby we are *conformed to the image of our Lord*, the *man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief:* tribulation is our lot, *to which we are appointed*, and to which *we are called;* persecution is the condition proposed to us; it being told us, that *every one who will live godlily in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution:* affliction is the way toward happiness, *for by many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of heaven;* it is represented as a favour granted to us to suffer; for ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, *to you*, saith St. Paul, *it hath been indulged, not only to believe in Christ, but to suffer for him;* it is *our glory*, our joy, our beatitude. Our work is *to run with patience the race that is set before us:* in fine, faith and patience are the pair, which being coupled together draw us to the *inheritance of the promises;* patience being *needful* to introduce and support faith.

Heb. xii. 6. Matt. xvi. 24. Rom. viii. 29. Isa. liii. 3. 1 Thess. iii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 21. 1 Tim. iii. 12. Acts xiv. 22. Phil. i. 29. Eph. iii. 13. Matt. v. 11. James i. 2. Rom. v. 3. James i. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 14. iii. 14. Heb. xii. 1. vi. 12. Rev. xiii. 10. Heb. x. 36. Luke xxi. 19.

7. With faith also must concur the virtue of prudence, in all its parts and instances: therein is exerted a sagacity, discerning things as they really are in themselves, not as they appear through the masks and disguises of fallacious semblance, whereby they would delude us; not suffering us to be abused by the gaudy shows, the false glosses, the tempting allurements of things; therein we must use discretion in prizing things rightly, according to their true nature and intrinsic worth; in choosing things really good, and rejecting things truly evil, however each kind may seem to our erroneous sense; therein we must have a good prospect, extending itself to the final

consequences of things, so that looking over present contingencies we descry what certainly will befall us through the course of eternal ages. SERM. II.

In faith is exercised that prudence, which guideth and prompteth us to walk by the best rules, to act in the best manner, to apply the best means toward attainment of the best ends.

The prudence of faith is indeed the only prudence considerable; all other prudence regarding objects very low and ignoble, tending to designs very mean or base, having fruits very poor or vain. To be wise about affairs of this life (these fleeting, these empty, these deceitful shadows) is a sorry wisdom; to be wise in *purveying for the flesh*, is the wisdom of a beast, which is wise enough to prog for its sustenance; to be wise in gratifying fancy, is the wisdom of a child, who can easily entertain and please himself with trifles; to be wise in contriving mischief, or embroiling things, is the wisdom of a fiend, in which the old serpent, or grand politician of hell, doth exceed all the Machiavels in the world: this, as St. James saith, is *earthly, sensual, devilish wisdom;* but the wisdom of faith, or that *wisdom which is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good works.* Rom. xiii. 14. Jam. iii. 15, 17.

8. In fine, the embracing Christian doctrine doth suppose a mind imbued with all kinds of virtuous disposition in some good degree; for seeing that doctrine doth highly commend, and strictly prescribe all virtue, he must needs be a friend to all virtue, and a devoted servant thereto, who can heartily approve and like it: his eye must be sound, and clear from mists of bad prejudice, who can ken the beauty, and Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 3.

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bear the lustre of it; his palate must be pure from vicious tinctures, who can relish its sweetness; his heart must be void of corrupt affections and desires, who sincerely doth affect it, and firmly doth cleave thereto; his conscience must be good, who can hope for the excellent rewards which it proposeth, who can stand proof against the terrible menaces it denounceth; his intentions must be upright, who dareth offer them to be scanned by so exact rules; his life must in good measure be blameless, who can present it before the bar of so rigorous judgment; he must be a man of much goodness, ingenuity, and integrity, who can think it expedient, who can be content and willing that such a doctrine be accounted true, which so plainly discountenanceth, which so peremptorily condemneth, which so severely punisheth all kinds of wickedness; for *He*, as our Saviour saith, and he alone, *who doeth the truth, doth come to the light, that his deeds may be manifested.* *Faith* therefore, *and good conscience*, are well by St. Paul so often coupled, as inseparable associates.

John iii. 21.

1 Tim. i. 5. i. 19. iii. 9.

Where now are they, who wonder that faith is so commended, doth find such acceptance with God, and is so crowned with reward; who would banish it from the company of virtues, and out of all moral consideration; who would have it taken for an involuntary act, forced on the mind, and issuing from dry speculation? for, seeing so many excellent dispositions of soul are its ingredients, essentially connected with it; seeing so many noble acts of will do concur to its production; seeing it hath so many choice virtues inseparably adherent, as previous or concomitant to it; it is no wonder that they should

moralize it, should render it very considerable, so capable of praise, so worthy of recompense. SERM. II.

If we therefore do believe, because we will apply our minds to regard our best concerns, because we will yield due attention to the declarations and overtures of God, because we will take the pains to weigh the reasons persuasive of truth, because we look on things with an indifferent eye, and judge uprightly about them, because we have the courage, the patience, the prudence, the innocence, requisite for avowing such truths; then surely faith is voluntary, and therefore very commendable.

Whoever indeed will consider the nature of man, or will consult obvious experience, shall find, that in all practical matters, our will, or appetite, hath a mighty influence upon our judgment of things; causing men with great attention to regard that which they affect, and carefully to mark all reasons making for it; but averting from that which they dislike, and making them to overlook the arguments which persuade it; whence men generally do suit their opinions to their inclinations; warping to that side where their interest doth lie, or to which their complexion, their humour, their passions, their pleasure, their ease doth sway them; so that almost any notion will seem true, which is profitable, which is safe, which is pleasant, or anywise grateful to them; that notion false, which in any such respect doth cross them: very few can abstract their minds from such considerations, or embrace pure truth, divested of them; and those few, who do so, must therein most employ their will, by strong efforts of voluntary resolution and patience disengaging their minds from those clogs and biasses. This is parti- —facile quæ credita prosunt credimus.

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cularly notorious in men's adherence to parties, divided in opinion, which is so regulated by that sort of causes, that if you do mark what any man's temper is, and where his interest lieth, you may easily prognosticate on what side he will be, and with what degree of seriousness, of vigour, of zeal he will cleave thereto: a timorous man you may be almost sure will be on the safer side; a covetous man will bend to that party, where gain is to be had; an ambitious man will close with the opinion passing in court; a careless man will comply with the fashion; affection arising from education or prejudice will hold others stiff; few do follow the results of impartial contemplation.

All faith therefore, even in common things, may be deemed voluntary, no less than intellectual; and Christian faith is especially such, as requiring thereto more application of soul, managed by choice, than any other; whence the ancients, in their description of it, do usually include this condition, supposing it not to be a bare assent of the understanding, but a free consent of the will; [n] *Faith*, saith Clemens Alexandrinus, *is a spontaneous acceptance, and compliance with divine religion;* and, *To be made at first was not in our power; but God persuadeth us to follow those things, which he liketh, choosing by the rational faculties, which he hath given us, and so leadeth us to faith;* saith Justin the Martyr.

[n] Πίστις πρόληψις ἑκούσιός ἐστι, θεοσεβείας συγκατάθεσις, &c. Clem. Strom. ii. p. 265.

Ἐθελοντὴν συνέπεσθαι τῷ συμφέροντι συνέσεως ἀρχή. Ibid.

Τὸ μὲν ἀρχὴν γενέσθαι οὐχ ἡμέτερον ἦν. τὸ δὲ ἑξακολουθῆσαι οἷς φῶς αὐτῷ αἱρουμένους δι' ὧν αὐτὸς ἐδωρήσατο λογικῶν δυνάμεων, πείθει τε καὶ εἰς πίστιν ἄγει ἡμᾶς. Just. Mart. Apol. ii. (p. 58.)

The same is supposed in holy scripture; where of believers it is said, that they did ἀσμένως, *gladly*, or willingly *receive the word*, and they received it μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, *with all* willingness, or *readiness of mind.* SERM. II. Acts ii. 41. xvii. 11.

And to defect of will infidelity is often ascribed: *Ye will not come unto me*, saith our Saviour, *that ye might have life*; and, *How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!* and, *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come:* and, *Of this,* saith St. Peter of some profane infidels, *they are willingly ignorant, that by the word of God the heavens were of old:* and of the like St. Paul saith, *That they received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* John v. 40. Luke xiii. 34. Matt. xxii. 3. 2 Pet. iii. 5. 2 Thess. ii. 10, 12.

Indeed to prevent this exception, that faith is a forced act, and therefore not moral; or to render it more voluntary and worthy, God hath not done all that he might have done to convince men, or to wring belief from them: he hath not stamped on his truth that glaring evidence, which might dazzle our minds; he doth not propose it armed with irresistible cogency; he hath not made the objects of faith conspicuous to sense, nor the propositions thereof demonstrable by reason, like theorems of geometry: this indeed would be to depose faith, to divest it of its excellency, and bereave it of its praise; this were to deprive us of that *blessedness*, which is adjudged to those, who *believe and do not see*; this would prostitute wisdom to be defloured by the

Ἄπιστος, ὦ φίλον ψεῦδος ἀκούσιον. Clem. Alex. Strom. (p. 268.) et Plat. (p. 841.) John xx. 29.

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foolish, and expose truth to be rifled by the profane; this would take from our reason its noblest exercise, and fairest occasion of improvement; this would confound persons fit to be distinguished, the sagacious and the stupid, the diligent and the slothful, the ingenuous and the froward, the sober and the vain, the pious and the profane; *the children of wisdom*, which are apt to *justify it*, and the sons of folly, who *hate knowledge;* the friends of truth and virtue, and the lovers of falsehood and unrighteousness.

Matt. xi. 19. Prov. i. 29. v. 12. 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11, 12.

God therefore hath exhibited his truth, shining through some mists of difficulty and doubt, that only those who have clear eyes, who do look attentively, who are willing to see, may discern it; that those who have eyes may see, and *those who have ears may hear*. He meaneth this way of discovering his mind for a test to prove our ingenuity, for a field to exercise our industry, for an occasion to express his goodness in crowning the wisdom and virtue of good believers; that *the trial of your faith*, saith St. Peter, *being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*. He meaneth also thence to display his justice in punishing the slothful, the vain, the perverse, the profane; that, as the apostle saith, *all men might be judged, who believed not the truth—but had pleasure in unrighteousness:* hence, *There must of necessity be scandals*, said our Saviour; hence our Lord was *set for a mark to be contra-*

Matt. xi. 15. xiii. 9. Matt. xiii. 11. ὑμῖν δέδοται. Chrys. in Joh. Or. 5. 1 Pet. i. 7, 8. James i. 3. 2 Thess. ii. 12. Matt. xviii. 7. Luke xvii. 1. ii. 35.

dicted, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed; and, *There must be heresies,* saith St. Paul; why? that *they which are approved* (οἱ δόκιμοι, persons that can bear the test) *may be manifested.* SERM. II. 1 Cor. xi. 19. (1 John ii. 19.)

God dealeth with us as he did with his ancient people. He, to assure them of his gracious protection and providence over them, or to persuade them of the truth of what he by Moses taught them, did before their eyes perform stupendous works in their behalf, affording them miraculous deliverances from their enemies, and prodigious supplies of their needs; the sight of which did extort a temporary belief; *Then,* it is said, *they believed his words, and sang his praise;* and, When *Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.* Yet withal God suffered divers things to fall out, *to humble them,* as it is said, *and to prove them, and to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep his commandments, or no:* the result of which dispensations was, that they being inconsiderate, impatient, and refractory, *believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation; they despised that pleasant land, and gave no credence to his word:* so God dealt with that typical people; and in like manner doth he proceed with us: he hath ministered signal attestations to the gospel; he hath dispensed arguments abundantly sufficient to convince well disposed minds of its truth; but he hath not cleared it from all scruples, which may disturb the froward or the delicate; he hath not exempted it from all scandals, which may disgust the perverse and stubborn; he hath not pre- Ps. lxxviii. cv. cvi. Ps. cvi. 12. Exod. xiv. 31. Deut. iv. 32. viii. 2. vii. 19. Ps. lxxviii. 22, 32, 56. &c. Ps. cvi. 24. Neh. ix. 16. Deut. i. 32.

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vented all exceptions or cavils devisable by curious or captious wits against it; he hath not guarded it wholly from the malicious opposition of those, whose interest it might seem, in favour of their vices and follies, to impugn it: just it was, that to such the gospel should be *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; who stumble at the word, being disobedient, unto which they were appointed,* (that is, God having so purposely ordered the evangelical dispensation, that such persons should not approve it, or comply with it;) just it was, that they should be debarred from a knowledge of that truth, which they should abuse, and *detain in unrighteousness;* just it was, that they should be punished with such temptations unto doubt and error, *who would not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

Rom. i. 18. 28.

2 Thess. ii. 10, 11, 12.

Indeed, more abundant light of conviction, as it would deprive good men of much praise and reward, so it might be hurtful to many persons; who having affections indisposed to comply with truth, would outface and outbrave it, however clear and evident; *they would,* as Job speaketh, *rebel against the light,* although shining on them with a meridian splendour; they would plunge themselves into an inexcusable and incorrigible state of impiety, *doing despite to the Spirit of grace,* and involving themselves in the *unpardonable sin;* as we have many instances in the evangelical history of those, who beholding unquestionable evidences of divine power attesting to our Lord's doctrine, which they could not but acknowledge, did yet oppose it, did blaspheme against it, did outrageously persecute it.

Job xxiv. 14.

Heb. x. 29. Matt. xii. 31, 45. ix. 34. xii. 24. Luke xiii. 17. John xi. 47. xii. 37. ix. 28. Acts iv. 16.

Should God, as he once did in a dreadful manner,

thunder out his laws, and *shake the earth with his voice*, yet many would little regard them; should God, in confirmation of his will, perform every day as many miracles, as he did once in Egypt, yet there would be Pharaohs, *hardening their hearts* against it; should God himself descend from heaven, as once he did, and converse with us, instructing us by discourse and practice, displaying among us conspicuous evidences of his power and goodness, yet *who would believe his report, to whom would the arm of the Lord be revealed?* how few cordially would embrace his doctrine, or submit to his law! As it was then, so it would be now; he would be hated, be scorned, be affronted, and abused, by persons qualified with like affections, as those were, who so then did serve him; for in all times like persons will do like things: as then only *his sheep* (that is, well disposed persons, like sheep, simple, harmless, and ductile) *did hear his voice, and follow him;* so others *would not believe him, because they were not of his sheep*, being imbued with swinish, currish, wolvish dispositions, incapacitating them to follow his conduct: there would be persons like to those, of whom it is said, *Behold, ye scorners, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.*

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Heb. xii. 18, 26.

John xii. 28.

Rom. x. 16.

John x. 27.

John x. 26.

Acts xiii. 41.

(It is with instituted religion as it is with natural; the works of nature are so many continual miracles of divine power and wisdom; in the common track of Providence many wonderful things do occur; yet who by them is moved to acknowledge and adore God? notwithstanding them, how many atheists and Epicureans are there! So will it be in regard to di-

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vine revelations, which however clearly attested, will yet be questioned.)

[o]Those indeed whom sufficient reasons (such as God hath dispensed to us) will not convince, upon them the greatest motives would have small efficacy; so father Abraham told the rich man; *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

Luke xvi. 31. (John v. 47.)

They may pretend, if they had more light, they would be persuaded; like those who said, *Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe;* but it would not in effect prove so, for they would yet be devising shifts, and forging exceptions; or, however, they would oppose an impudent face and an obstinate will against the truth.

Matt. xxvii. 42.

Wherefore it was for the common good, and to Divine wisdom it appeared sufficient, that upon the balance truth should much outweigh falsehood, if the scales were held in an even hand, and no prejudices were thrown in against it; that it should be conspicuous enough to eyes, which do not avert themselves from it, *or wink* on purpose, or be clouded with lust and passion; it was enough that infidelity is justly chargeable on men's wilful pravity; and that προφασιν οὐκ ἔχουσι, *they have not,* as our Saviour saith, *any reasonable excuse* for it.

Acts xxviii. 27.

John xv. 22.

But so much for the causes and adjuncts of faith; the effects and consequences of it I reserve for another occasion.

[o] Γνώμης χρεία εὐγνώμονος· κἂν μὴ αὕτη παρῇ, σημείων οὐδὲν ὄφελος. Chrys. in Matt. Or. 43.

SERMON III.

OF THE VIRTUE AND REASONABLENESS OF FAITH.

2 Pet. i. 1.

——to them that have obtained like precious faith with us.

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Of all Christian virtues, as there is none more approved and dignified by God, so there is none less considered or valued by men, than faith; the adversaries of our religion have always had a special pique at it; wondering that it should be commanded, as if it were an arbitrary thing, or in our choice to believe what we please; why it should be commended, as if it were praiseworthy to be subdued by reason; either by that which is too strong for us to resist, or by that which is too weak to conquer us.

But that faith worthily deserveth the praises and privileges assigned thereto, we may be satisfied, if we do well consider its nature and ingredients, its causes and rise, its effects and consequences.

In its nature it doth involve knowledge, or the possession of truth, which is the natural food, the proper wealth, the special ornament of our soul; knowledge of truths most worthy of us, and important to us, as conversing about the highest objects,

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and conducing to the noblest use; knowledge peculiar, and not otherwise attainable, as lying without the sphere of our sense, and beyond the reach of our reason; knowledge conveyed to us with great evidence and assurance; the greatest indeed that well can be, considering the nature of its objects, and the general capacities of men, and the most proper way of working upon reasonable natures.

It implieth (that which giveth to every virtue its form and worth) a good use of our reason, in carefully weighing and uprightly judging about things of greatest concernment to us; it implieth a closing with God's providence dispensing opportunities, and representing motives serving to beget it; a compliance with God's grace attracting and inclining our souls to embrace his heavenly truth: it implieth also good opinions of God, and good affections toward him, which are requisite to the believing (upon his testimony, promise, or command) points very sublime, very difficult, very cross to our fancy and humour.

The causes also, which concur in its production, are very excellent; many virtuous dispositions of soul are requisite to the conception and birth of it: there must be a sober, composed, and wakeful mind, inquisitive after truth, apt to observe it starting, and ready to lay hold on it: there must be diligence and industry in attending to the proposals, and considering the enforcements of it: there must be sincerity and soundness of judgment, in avowing its cause, against the exceptions raised against it by prejudice and carnal conceit, by sensual appetites and passions, by temptation and worldly interest: there must be great humility, disposing us to a sub-

mission of our understanding, and a resignation of our will unto God, in admitting notions which debase haughty conceit, in espousing duties which repress sturdy humour: there must be much resolution and courage, in undertaking things very difficult, hazardous, and painful; much patience, in adhering to a profession, which exacteth so much pain, and exposeth to so much trouble: there must be great prudence, in applying our choice (among so many competitions and pretences claiming it) to that which is only good; in seeing through fallacious disguises, and looking over present appearances, so as to descry the just worth, and the final consequence of things: there must, in fine, be a love of truth, and a liking of all virtue, which is so highly commended, and so strictly prescribed by the Christian doctrine. SERM. III.

These particulars, commending faith to us, I have already largely prosecuted; I shall only therefore now insist upon the last head, concerning its effects, whereby (as the goodness of a tree is known by its fruits) the great excellency thereof will appear.

Its effects are of two sorts; one springing naturally from it, the other following it in way of recompense from Divine bounty: I shall only touch the first sort; because in this its virtue is most seen, as in the other its felicity.

Faith is naturally efficacious in producing many rare fruits; naturally, I say, not meaning to exclude supernatural grace, but supposing faith to be a fit instrument thereof; for *God worketh in us to will, and to do*, but in a way suitable to our nature, employing such means as properly serve to incline and

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excite us unto good practice; and such is faith, supported and wielded by his grace; for indeed

(Acts xi. 24.)

Even in common life faith is the compass by which men steer their practice, and the main spring of action, setting all the wheels of our activity on going; every man acteth with serious intention, and with vigour answerable to his persuasion of things, that they are worthy his pains, and attainable by his endeavours. What moveth the husbandman to employ so much care, toil, and expense in manuring his ground, in ploughing, in sowing, in weeding, in fencing it, but a persuasion that he shall reap a crop, which in benefit will answer all? What stirreth up the merchant to undertake tedious voyages over vast and dangerous seas, adventuring his stock, abandoning his ease, exposing his life to the waves, to rocks and shelves, to storms and hurricanes, to cruel pirates, to sweltry heats and piercing colds, but a persuasion, that wealth is a very desirable thing, and that hereby he may acquire it? What induceth a man to conform unto strictest rules of diet and abstinence, readily to swallow down the most unsavoury potions, patiently to endure cuttings and burnings, but a faith that he thereby shall recover or preserve health, that highly valuable good? From the same principle are all the carking, all the plodding, all the drudging, all the daring, all the scuffling in the world easily derivable. In like manner is faith the square and the source of our spiritual activity, disposing us seriously to undertake; earnestly, resolutely, industriously, and constantly to pursue the designs of virtue and piety, brooking the pains and hardships, breaking through the difficul-

ties and hazards, which occur in religious practice; engaging us to the performance of duty, deterring us from the commission of sin. SERM. III.

What but faith, eyeing *the prize*, will quicken us *to run patiently the race that is set before us?* what but faith, apprehending *the crown*, will animate us to *fight stoutly the good fight?* what but faith, assuring the wages, will support us in working all the day with unwearied industry and patience? what can raise pious hope, what can kindle holy desire, what can spur on conscientious endeavour, but a faith of attaining worthy recompenses for doing well? what can impress an effectual dislike and dread of offending, but a faith of incurring grievous punishment and sad mischiefs thence? Heb. xii. 1. Phil. iii. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25. 2 Tim. iv. 7. 1 Tim. i. 8. vi. 7.

In reason a strong and steady belief but of one point or two, would suffice to engage us upon all duty, and to restrain us from all sin. Did we only believe the future judgment, with the results of it, that alone would be an effectual both spur and curb to us: for who believing that his soul then shall be laid bare, that his inmost thoughts and secretest purposes shall be disclosed unto the view of all the world, will presume to harbour in his breast any foul thought or base design? who believing that he shall then be obliged to render an account of *every idle word*, will dare to utter villainous blasphemies, wicked curses, fond oaths, profane jests, vile slanders or detractions, harsh censures, or bitter reproaches? who being persuaded that a rigorous amends will then be exacted from him for any wrong he doeth, will not be afraid with violence to oppress, or with fraud to circumvent his neighbour? who deeming himself accountable then for every talent

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and opportunity, will find in his heart to squander away or misemploy his time, his power, his wealth, his credit, his wit, his knowledge, his advantages in any kind of doing God service? who knowing himself obnoxious to a sudden trial, whereat his estate, his reputation, his life, all his interest and welfare must lie at stake, will contentedly lose his mind in wanton sports or wild frolics? In fine, if we are really persuaded, that presently after this short and transitory life, we shall openly, in the face of God, angels, and men, be arraigned at an impartial bar, where all our thoughts, our words, our actions shall most exactly be sifted and scanned; according to which cognizance a just doom shall be pronounced, and certainly executed upon us; how must this needs engage us to be very sober and serious, very circumspect and vigilant over our mind, our tongue, our dealings, our conversation, our whole life!

Again, If a man firmly believeth, that by a pious course of life, he shall gain the present favour and friendship of the Almighty, with all the real goods whereof he is capable; and that hereafter he shall be rewarded for it with an eternal life in perfect rest, in glory, in joy, in beatitude unspeakable; that he shall obtain *an incorruptible inheritance, a treasure that can never fail, a crown that will not fade, a kingdom that cannot be shaken;* wherein he shall enjoy the blissful vision of God, smiling in love upon him; the presence of his gracious Redeemer, embracing him with dear affection; the most delightful society of blessed angels, and *just spirits made perfect;* a state of felicity, surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it; of which the brightest splendours, and the choicest

1 Pet. i. 4. Luke xii. 33. 1 Pet. v. 4. Heb. xii. 28.

1 Cor. ii. 9.

pleasures here can yield but a faint resemblance; how can he forbear earnestly to embrace and pursue such a course of practice! what zeal must such a persuasion inspire; what vigour must it rouse within him! who upon any terms would forfeit the hopes of such a happiness? who would not be glad to undertake any pains, or endure any hardships for it? SERM. III.

And who likewise heartily is persuaded, that by vicious conversation he shall incur the wrath of Almighty God, and stand obnoxious to the strokes of his severe justice; that persisting therein he infallibly must drop into the bottomless pit, into that utter darkness, that furnace of fire unquenchable, that lake of flaming brimstone; where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, where the immortal worm shall gnaw on his heart, and he must feel the pangs of a never-dying death; that state of most bitter remorse, of most horrid despair, of most forlorn disconsolateness, of continual and endless torment; wherein he shall be banished from the face of God, and by immutable destiny barred from all light, all ease, all solace; from any glimpse of hope, from any respite of pain; the wretchedness of which condition not the sharpest pain of body, not the sorest anguish of mind, not the saddest distress here can anywise reach or represent; whoever, I say, is possessed with a belief of these things consequent on a wicked life, will he not thence be effectually scared from it? what bait of temptation shall allure him, what force shall drive him thereto? will he for a flash of pleasure, for a puff of fame, for a lump of pelf; will he in compliment or complaisance to others, in apish imitation or compliance with a fashion, out of mere

Matt. xviii. 30. Jude 6. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Luke iv. 31. Rev. xx. 3. Matt. viii. 12. xiii. 42, 50. Mark ix. 43, 45. (Isa. xxxiii. 14.) Rev. xx. 21. Matt. ix. 44. Rev. xx. 10. Dan. xii. 2. Everlasting shame. 2 Thess. i. 9. Rom. ii. 9. στενοχωρία.

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wantonness, or in regard to some petty interest; will he in hope of any worldly good, or fear of any inconvenience here, suffer himself to be cast into that dismal state? will he not sooner go and shake a lion by the paw, sooner provoke an adder to bite him, sooner throw himself down a precipice, or leap into a caldron of burning pitch? Certainly in reason to believe such things, and to sin, can hardly be consistent.

Such a general influence is faith, looking with a provident eye upon future rewards and consequences of things, apt to have upon our practice: the which collaterally taking in the glorious attributes of God, the gracious performances of our Saviour, the beauty and sweetness of each divine precept, the manifold obligations and encouragements to duty, the whole latitude and harmony of evangelical truth, all tending to the recommendation of holiness, what efficacy must it needs have! how powerfully must it incite us to good practice!

ἁγνίζει ψυχάς. 1 Pet. i. 22. καθαρίζει καρδίας. Acts xv. 9.

We are told, that faith doth *purify our souls*, and *cleanse our hearts;* that is, our whole interior man, all the faculties of our soul; disposing them to an universal obedience and conformity to God's holy will; and so it is; for faith not only doth clear our understanding from its defects, (blindness, ignorance, error, doubt,) but it cleanseth our will from its vicious inclinations, (from stubborn, froward, wanton, giddy humours;) it freeth our affections from disorder and distemper, in tendency toward bad objects, and in pursuit of indifferent things with immoderate violence; it purgeth our conscience, or reflexive powers, from anxious fear, suspicion, anguish, dejection, despair, and all such passions which corrode

and fret the soul: how it effecteth this we might declare; but we cannot better set forth its efficacy and puissance, than by considering the special and immediate influence it plainly hath in the production of each virtue, or on the performance of every duty; *Add to your faith virtue*, saith St. Peter; implying the natural order of things, and that if true faith precede, virtue will easily follow. SERM. III. 2 Pet. i. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 22.

The chief of all virtues, *piety*, (comprising the love of God, fear and reverence of him, confidence in him, gratitude for his favours and mercies, devotion toward him, a disposition to worship and serve him,) seemeth according to reason inevitably consequent from it; for can we believe God superexcellent in all perfection, and immensely benign toward us; can we be persuaded that in free goodness he did create us, and doth continually preserve us in being; that his bounty hath conferred on us all our endowments of soul, and all our accommodations of life; that he hath a tender desire of our welfare, from which even our most heinous offences and provocations cannot divert him; that he most wonderfully hath provided for our happiness; in order thereto, when we had rebelled and revolted from him, sending down out of his bosom, from the top of celestial glory and bliss, his only dear Son, into this base and frail state, to sustain the infirmities of our nature, the inconveniences of a poor life, the pains of a bitter and shameful death, for our recovery from sin and misery; that with infinite patience he driveth on this gracious design, continually watching over us, attracting us to good, and reclaiming us from evil by his grace, notwithstanding our frequent and stiff reluctancies thereto; can, I say, we

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heartily believe these points, and not love him? Can the eye of faith behold so lovely beauty, so ravishing sweetness in him, and the heart not be affected? Can we apprehend so many miracles of nature, of providence, of grace performed by him for our sake, and not be thankful to him? Can we likewise believe God infinitely powerful, infinitely just, infinitely pure, and withal not dread him, not adore him? Can we believe him most able, most willing, most ready to do us good, and not confide in him? or can we take him to be most veracious, most faithful, most constant, and not rely on his promises? Can we avow him to be our Maker, our Patron, our Lord, our Judge, and not deem ourselves much obliged, much concerned to serve him? Can we believe, that God in our need is accessible, that he calleth and inviteth us to him, that he is ever willing and ever ready to hear us, that he is by promise engaged to grant us whatever we do with humble fervency and constancy request; yet forbear to pray, or easily desist from it? Do we believe his omnipresence and omniscience; that he is with us wherever we go, doth know all we think, hear all we say, see all we do; and will not belief engage us to think honestly, to speak reverently, to act innocently and decently before him? Do we believe, that God's commands do proceed from that will, to which rectitude is essential; from that wisdom, which infallibly discerneth what is just and fit; from that goodness, which will require from us nothing but what is best for us; from that unquestionable and uncontrollable authority, to which all things are subject, and must submit; will not this sufficiently engage us to obedience? Surely the real belief (such as we have about

common things, apprehended by our reason or by our sense) of any such divine act, or attribute, cannot fail to strike pious affection, and pious awe into us. SERM. III.

After piety, the next great virtue is *charity*, the which also is easily derived *from a pure heart*, as St. Paul speaketh, *and faith unfeigned;* it representing peculiar obligations and inducements thereto, from the most peremptory commands of God, from the signal recompenses annexed to that duty, from the strict relations between Christians, from the stupendous patterns of charity set before us. Who can withhold love from him, whom he believeth his brother, in a way far nobler than that of nature, so constituted by God himself, the common Father, by spiritual regeneration, and adoption of grace; whom he believeth born of the same heavenly seed, renewed after the same divine image, quickened by the same Holy Spirit; united to him not only in blood, but in soul; resembling him, not in temper of body or lineaments of face, but in conformity of judgment and practice; partner of the one inheritance, and destinated to lead a life with him through all eternity, in peaceful consortship of joy and bliss? Who can deny him love, whom he believeth out of the same miserable case by the same price redeemed into the same state of mercy? for whom he by faith vieweth the common Saviour divesting himself of glory, pinching himself with want, wearying himself with labour, loaded with contumelies, groaning under pain, weltering in blood, and breathing out his soul, propounding all this as an example of our charity, and demanding it from us as the most special instance of our grateful obedience to him? What 2 Tim. i. 15.

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greater endearments can be imagined, what more potent incentives of love, what more indissoluble bands of friendship, than are these? Can such a believer forbear to wish his neighbour well, to have complacence in his good, to sympathise with his adversities, to perform all offices of kindness to him? Can he in the need of his brother *shut up his bowels of compassion*, or withhold his hand from relieving him? Can a man know that God requireth this practice as the noblest fruit of our faith, and most acceptable part of our obedience, which he hath promised to crown with most ample rewards; can he believe, that God will recompense his *labour of love* with everlasting rest, and for a small expense of present goods will bestow immense treasures in the other world, and yet abstain from charitable beneficence? Who can forbear sowing, that believeth he shall reap so plentiful a crop; or abstain from dealing in that heavenly trade, whereby he is assured to be so vast a gainer?

In like manner is faith productive of *meekness*, in comporting with injuries, discourtesies, neglects, and provocations of any kind: for who can be fiercely angry, who can entertain any rancorous grudge or displeasure against him, whom he believeth his brother, and that upon so many accounts he is obliged to love him? Who that believeth God hath pardoned him so much, and doth continually bear so many wrongs, so many indignities from him, will not in conscience and gratitude toward God, and in compliance with so great an example, bear with the infirmities of his neighbour? Who can look upon the pattern of his Saviour, patiently enduring so many grievous affronts, without a disposition to imitate

him, and to do the like for his sake? Who that taketh himself for a child of God, a citizen of heaven, an heir of eternal glory, can be so much concerned in any trivial accident here; can design to have his passion stirred for any worldly respect? as if his honour could be impaired, or his interest suffer diminution by any thing said or done here below. SERM. III.

Again, Faith is the mother of *sincerity*, that comprehensive virtue, which seasoneth all other virtues, and keepeth them sound: for it assuring us, that an all-seeing eye doth view our heart, doth *encompass our paths*, is present to all our closest retirements; that *all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do*, how vain must it appear to us anywise to dissemble, or prevaricate, speaking otherwise than we think, acting otherwise than we pretend, seeming otherwise than we are; concealing our real intents, or disguising them under masks of deceitful appearance! If we believe that we shall be judged, not according to the opinions of men concerning us, or our port and garb in this world, but as we are in ourselves, and according to strictest truth; that in the close of things we shall be set forth in our right colours and complexion, all varnish being wiped away; that all our thoughts, words, and deeds shall be exposed to most public censure; that hypocrisy will be a sore aggravation of our sin, and much increase our shame; how can we satisfy ourselves otherwise than in the pure integrity of our heart, and clear uprightness of our dealing? Ps. cxxxix. 2. Heb. iv. 13.

Likewise the admirable virtue of *humility*, or sobriety of mind, doth sprout from faith; informing

SERM. III. us, that we have nothing of our own to boast of, but that all the good we have, we can do, we may hope for, are debts we owe to God's pure bounty and mercy; prompting us to assume nothing to ourselves, but to ascribe all the honour of our endowments, of our performances, of our advantages unto God; keeping us in continual dependance upon God for the succours of his providence and his grace; representing to us our natural weakness, vileness, and wretchedness, together with the adventitious defects and disadvantages from our wilful misbehaviour, the unworthiness of our lives, the many heinous sins we have committed, and the grievous punishments we have deserved.

He who by the light of faith doth see, that he came naked into the world, heir to nothing but the sad consequences of the original apostasy; that he is a worm, crawling on earth, feeding on dust, and tending to corruption; that he liveth only by reprieve from that fatal sentence, *The day thou sinnest thou shalt die;* that he was a caitiff wretch, a mere slave to sin, a forlorn captive of hell; and that all his recovery thence, or capacity of a better state, is wholly due to mercy; that he subsisteth only upon alms, and hath nothing but his sins and miseries, which he may call his own; he that believeth these things, what conceit can he have of himself, what confidence in his own worth, what complacency in his estate?

Faith also doth engage to the virtue of *temperance;* discovering not only the duty, but the necessity thereof, in regard to our state, which is a state of continual exercise and strife; wherefore as wrestlers with many strong adversaries, as racers for a noble prize, we by good diet and constant labour

must keep ourselves in heart, in temper, in breath to perform those combats; according to that of St. Paul, *Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.* SERM. III. 1 Cor. ix. 25.

Again, Faith is productive of *contentedness* in our state: for how is it possible that he, who is fully satisfied that God appointeth his station, and allotteth his portion to each one; that all occurrences depend on his will, and are managed by his providence, should take any thing amiss; as if it could hap better, than as infinite goodness pleaseth, and infinite wisdom determineth? How can he, that believeth God most powerful and able, most kind and willing, ever present and ready to help him, be in any case disconsolate, or despair of seasonable relief? What can discompose him, who knoweth himself, if he pleaseth, immoveably happy; that his best good is secure from all attacks, and beyond the reach of any misfortune; that desiring what is best, he cannot fail of his desire; that (himself excepted) all the world cannot considerably wrong or hurt him?

He that is assured, those precepts (*Be careful for nothing; Cast all your burden on God; Be content with such things as ye have*) were not given to mock and gull us; that those declarations and promises (*There is no want to them that fear God; No good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly; There shall no evil happen to the just; The desire of the righteous shall be granted; All things work together for good to them who love God; Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*) were seriously made, and will surely be performed, how loose must his mind be

Matt. vi. 25. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Heb. xiii. 5. Luke xii. 29. Psal. xxxiv. 9. viii. 11. Prov. xii. 21. x. 24. Rom. viii. 28. Matt. vi. 33.

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from all solicitude and anxiety! how steady a calm, how sweet a serenity will that faith spread over his soul, in regard to all worldly contingencies!

It will also beget a cheerful *tranquillity* of mind, and *peace of conscience*, in regard to our future state; that which St. Paul calleth *all joy* and *peace in believing*; which the apostle to the Hebrews termeth *the confidence and rejoicing of hope*; of which St. Peter saith, *Believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*: for he that is persuaded that God (in whose disposal his fortune and felicity are) is reconciled and kindly affected toward him; that he doth concern himself in designing and procuring his salvation; that to purchase the means thereof for him, the Son of God purposely came down, and suffered death; that an act of oblivion is past, and a full remission of sins exhibited to him, if he will embrace it; that now *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*; and that, *being justified by faith, we have peace with God*; that blessing is his portion, and that an eternal heritage of joy is reserved for him, what ease must he find in his conscience, what comfort must possess his heart! how effectually will that of the prophet be accomplished in him, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee!*

Rom. xv. 13.
Heb. iii. 6. ix. 14.
1 Pet. i. 8.
Rom. viii. 1. v. 1.
Col. i. 5.
Isa. xxvi. 3.

Again, It is faith which breedeth the *courage*, and upholdeth the *patience* requisite to support us in our spiritual course.

It doth inspire *courage*, prompting to attempt the bravest enterprises, disposing to prosecute them resolutely, and enabling happily to achieve them: for he that believeth himself in his undertakings backed

mnipotence, and that, as St. Paul, *he can do* SERM.
ings through Christ strengthening him, what III.
l he fear to set upon, what difficulty should Phil. iv. 13.
him off, what hazard should dismay him? he (Phil. i. 28.
knoweth himself, by reason of the succour at- 1 John iv. 4.)
ıg him, infinitely to overmatch all opposition,
ı should he not dare to encounter? May he not
say with David, *The Lord is my light and* Ps. xxvii. 1.
lvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the cxviii. 6.
gth of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?
ll the world, let earth and hell combine to in- Chrys. tom.
him, how can that mate his spirit, if he believe vii. p. 51.
cannot overthrow him, or hurt him, being se- Psal. xlvi. 1, 2.
by the invincible protection of him, to whose
ll things do bow; in comparison to whom no-
is puissant, beside whom nothing is really for-
ble; seeing none but *he* can *kill*, none can touch Matt. x. 28.
ɔul?
we be armed with the spiritual panoply, having
ıead covered *with the helmet of salvation*, our Eph. vi. 15.
guarded with *the breastplate of righteous-* 1 Thess. v.
our *loins girt about with truth*, our *feet shod* 8.
the preparation of the Gospel of peace, all our Rom. xiii. 12.
sheltered by the impenetrable *shield of faith;* 2 Cor. vi. 7.
vielding in our hands by faith the *penetrant* Heb. iv. 12.
lged sword of the Spirit, which is the word
od; what assaults may we not sustain, what
ıhall we not easily repel?
ıe most redoubtable enemy we have is our own
, which, with a mighty force of violent appetites Gal. v. 17.
mpetuous passions, is ever struggling with our Rom. vii.
n, and warring against our soul; yet it faith 23.
dareth to resist, and is able to quell; opposing 1 Pet. ii. 11.
e present delights of sense the hopes of future

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joy, quashing transitory satisfactions by the fears of endless torment.

The *world* is another powerful enemy; ever striving, by its corrupt principles, by its bad examples, by its naughty fashions, by its menaces of persecution, damage, and disgrace, by its promises of vain honour, base profit, and foul pleasure, to overthrow and undo us; but a resolute faith will defeat its attempts; for, *He*, saith St. John, *that is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith:* the faith of a better world will defend us from the frowns and the flatteries of this; the riches, glories, and joys of heaven, thereby presented to our minds, will secure us from being enchanted with the wealth, splendours, and pleasures of earth.

1 John v. 4. (2 Pet. i. 4. Eph. iv. 22.)

Another fierce adversary is the cursed *fiend;* who ever, *like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking to devour us,* or like a treacherous snake lieth in wait to bite us; raising panic fears to daunt and affright us; laying subtle trains of temptation to abuse and seduce us: but him by resistance we may easily put to flight, for, *Resist the Devil,* saith St. James, *and he will flee from you;* and how we must resist him St. Peter telleth us, *Whom resist steadfast in faith;* and St. Paul also, *Above all,* saith he, *taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one:* if we hold forth this glittering shield, it will dazzle his sight, and damp his courage; being not able to endure its lustre, or stand its opposition, he will instantly retire; fearing that by our victory over his temptations (through reliance on God's help, and adherence to his truth) our reward shall be heightened, and his torment (the tor-

1 Pet. v. 8.

Jam. iv. 7. Eph. iv. 27.

1 Pet. v. 9. Eph. vi. 16.

ment of improsperous envy and baffled malice) be increased. SERM. III.

Faith also will arm us with *patience* to endure whatever events shall be dispensed with alacrity and comfort; lightening the most heavy burdens imposed on us, sweetening the most distasteful occurrences incident to us: for,

He who is persuaded, that by any damage here sustained for conscience toward God, he shall become a huge gainer, *receiving*, as the gospel promiseth, *an hundred fold, and inheriting eternal life*, what will he not gladly lose? will he not willingly put forth all he hath in this most profitable usury? will he not, as those Hebrews did, *take joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing that he hath in heaven a better and an enduring substance?* Matt. xix. 29. Luke xviii. 30. Phil. iii. 8. Heb. x. 34.

He who believeth, that in regard to any disgrace cast on him for his virtue, he shall be honoured by God, and crowned with heavenly glory, will he not in a manner be proud and ambitious of such disgrace? will he not, as the apostles did, *rejoice that he is counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ?* Matt. v. 12. Acts v. 41. 1 Pet. iv. 14.

He who trusteth, that for a little pains taken in God's service, he shall receive πολὺν μισθὸν, *abundant wages*, far exceeding the merit of his labour, will he not cheerfully bear any toil or drudgery therein? Matt. v. 12. Luke vi. 35. 1 Cor. iii. 8.

He who, with St. Paul, *computeth, that the light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed;* and that *those light momentany afflictions do work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory;* will they not indeed be light unto him; Rom. viii. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

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will he not feel them lying on him, as a few straws or feathers?

Matt. x. 39. xvi. 25. Luke xvii. 33. (Ps. cxxvi. 5. 2 Tim. ii. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 13. Rom. viii. 17. 2 Cor. iv. 10. Phil. i. 29. Rom. viii. 36. 2 Cor. iv. 11. 1 Cor. iv. 9. Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13. [a] Jam. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 5. Rom. v. 3. Matt. v. 12. Jam. i. 2. Rom. v. 3. Luke vi. 23.

He who conceiveth our Lord's word true, that *by losing his life he shall find it*, or that death shall become to him a door into a happy immortality, would he not gladly upon such terms be *killed all the day long*, and *be always delivered unto death for Jesus?*

He who by faith is assured, that any disasters befalling him are not inflictions of wrath, but expressions of love toward him, by God in kindness dispensed as trials of his faith[a], as exercises of his virtue, as occasions of his acquiring more plentiful rewards, how can he be disgusted at them, or discomposed by them? why should he not rather accept them as favours, as felicities, with a thankful and joyful heart; *counting it*, as St. James adviseth, *all joy when he falleth into divers temptations.*

In fine, it is faith alone which can plant in us that which is the root of all contentedness and all patience; a just indifference and unconcernedness [c] Col. iii. 1. about all things here: [c] it alone can untack our minds and affections from this world, rearing our souls from earth, and fixing them in heaven; for if we are persuaded, there is a state of life infinitely more desirable than the best condition here; if we believe there are things attainable by us, incomparably better than any which this world affordeth; in respect to which all these glories are but smoke, all these riches are but dirt, all these delights are but dreams, all these businesses are but triflings, all these substances are but shadows; how in our minds can we prize, how in our affections can we cleave unto

Omnia imaginaria in seculo, et nihil veri. *Tert. de Cor. c. 13.*

these things! how then can we find in our hearts to spend upon them more care or pain than is needful! SERM. III.

He that taketh himself here to be out of his element, that he is but *a stranger and sojourner upon earth*, that he *hath here no abiding city*, no country, no house, no land, no treasure, no considerable interest, but that he is merely wayfaring, in passage toward his true home and heavenly country; *the Jerusalem above*, whereof he is a citizen, where his grand concerns do lie, where he hath reserved for him immoveable possessions and unvaluable treasures; where he is designed to enjoy most noble privileges and most illustrious dignities in the court of the great King; how can he have his heart here sticking in this earthly clay, entangled with the petty cares, amused with the sorry entertainments of this life? how can he otherwise than with St. Paul be dead, and *crucified to this world?* how can he withhold his mind from soaring thither in contemplation, and in affection dwelling there, whither his desires and hopes do all tend, where his joy and felicity are found, where the great objects of his esteem and love do reside?

Ἡ πρώτη ἀρετὴ, καὶ ἡ πᾶσα ἀρετὴ τὸ ξένον εἶναι τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. Chrys. in Heb. xi. 13.

Gal. vi. 14. ii. 20.

Ἐκεῖ μετεωρίζει τὴν ψυχὴν ἡ πίστις. Chrys. tom. v. Or. 55.

But you will perhaps interpose, and say; These are indeed fine sayings, but where do such effects appear? who, I pray, doth practise according to these notions? where is that gallant to be found, who doth work so great exploits? where may we discern that height of piety, that tenderness of charity, that meek comportment with injuries and affronts, that clear sincerity, that depth of humility, that strictness of temperance, that perfect contentedness, and undisturbed calmness of mind, that stoutness of courage and stiffness of patience, which you

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talk of as the undoubted issues of faith? who is the man that with such glee doth hug afflictions, or biddeth adversity so welcome to his home? where dwell they, who so little regard this world, or so much affect the other? do we not see men run as if they were wild after preferment, wealth, and pleasure? what do they else, but scrape and scramble and scuffle for these things? doth not every man moan the scantness of his lot, doth not every man flinch at any trouble, doth not every one with all his might strive to rid himself of any thing disgustful to his sense or fancy? Are not therefore such encomiums of faith mere speculations, or brave rhodomontades of divinity?

The objection, I confess, is a shrewd one; but I must reply to it: you say, Where are such effects, where are such men? I ask then, Where is faith, where are believers? shew me the one, and I will shew you the other: if such effects do not appear, it is no argument that faith cannot produce them, but a sign that faith is wanting; as if a tree doth not put forth in due season, we conclude the root is dead; if a fountain yield no streams, we suppose it dried up: *Shew me*, saith St. James, *thy faith by thy works*; implying, that if good works do not shine forth in the conversation, it is suspicious there is no true faith in the heart: for such faith is not a feeble weening, or a notion swimming in the head, it is not a profession issuing from the mouth, it is not following such a garb, or adhering to such a party, but a persuasion fixed in the heart by good reason, by firm resolution, by lively sense; it is *with the heart*, as St. Paul saith, *man believeth unto righteousness*; that is the faith we speak of, and to

Jam. ii. 18.

Rom. x. 8.

which we ascribe the production of so great and worthy effects: if a man wanteth that, attested by practice suitable, though he know all the points exactly, though he readily will say *amen* to every article of the Creed, though he wear all the badges of a Christian, though he frequent the congregations, and comply with the forms of our religion, yet is he really an infidel: for is he not an infidel who denieth God? and is he not such a renegado who liveth impiously? he is so in St. Paul's account; for, *They profess*, saith he of such persons, *that they know God, but in works they deny him;* and, *He is not a Jew*, saith the same apostle, (he is not a Christian, may we by parity of reason affirm,) *who is one outwardly; but he is a Christian who is one inwardly, and faith is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God:* we may attribute to a barren conceit, or to a formal profession, the name of faith, but it is in an equivocal or wide sense; as a dead man is called a man, or a dry stick resting in the earth a tree; for so *faith*, saith St. James, *without works is dead;* is indeed but a trunk, or carcass of faith, resembling it in outward shape, but void of its *spirit* and life. SERM. III. Tit. i. 16. Rom. ii. 28. Jam. ii. 17. Jam. ii. 26.

To our infidelity therefore, that overspreading vice; to the unsincerity, or deadness of our faith, the great defects of our practice are to be imputed; that is the grand source from which impiety doth so overflow; that so few instances of sprightly virtue are visible, may be a sign the time is the same, or very like to that, of which our Lord saith, *When the Son of man cometh, shall he indeed find faith upon the earth?* Luke xviii. 8.

But if such effects can now rarely be found, yet

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time hath been, when they were more rife, scarce any time hath been quite destitute of them; every age since the foundation of things may have tokens and trophies to shew of faith's victorious efficacy; so many actions as there have been truly great and glorious, so many gallant feats have been achieved by faith: if we survey the lives of the ancient patriarchs, of the prophets, of the apostles, of the martyrs and confessors of true religion, their faith in all their works is most conspicuous.

Heb. xi. 4. Faith recommended that *excellent sacrifice of Abel* to divine acceptance, and advanced him to the rank of first martyr for piety.

On the wings of faith did Enoch mount to heaven, snatching the reward due to his faithful, and therefore well-pleasing obedience.

Faith preserved Noah from two mighty deluges, one of sin, the other of water, overflowing the earth; by it he stemmed the torrent of the one, and rode 2 Pet. ii. 5. on the back of the other; it encouraged him to be Gen. vii. 2. *a preacher of righteousness* against the grain, and a practiser of it against the fashion of the world, not regarding the common hatred and envy which he did incur thereby; it moved him to undertake that great and strange work of building the ark, for a sanctuary and seminary of mankind; the type of that spiritual vessel, by embarking into which through faith we are saved from utter ruin.

Faith disposed Abraham to forsake his country and home, his estate, his kindred, following divine Heb. xi. 8. conduct *he knew not whither;* to wander abroad Chrys. tom. vii. p. 17. and sojourn among barbarous strangers: faith inclined him, at God's command, to sacrifice his only son, a goodly youth in the flower of his age and

ɔpes, worthily most dear unto him; the son of his SERM.
d age, and the comfort thereof, given to him by III.
iracle and in special favour;* the prop of his family,
ıd the heir of promise, by whom his seed was to be
ropagated, and his memory to flourish; him was
ɜ ready in obedience with his own hand to slay,
ıelling nature and his bowels, thwarting his own
ɔpes, defying all semblances of contradiction, or
ashing between the commands and promises of
od.

Faith, through the rudest efforts of envy and ma-
ɜe, through the dismal calamities of exile and sla-
ɜry, through hideous snares of temptation, through
llainous slanders, through loathsome prisons and
tters of iron, all along sustained with admirable
ıoderation and presence of mind, did rear up Jo-
ɜph to the helm of that great kingdom.

The same inclined Moses to exchange the digni-
es and delights of a court for a state of vagrancy
ıd servility; it heartened him to outbrave the in-
incible obstinacy of a mighty prince; it steeled him
ith patience to conduct for the space of forty years,
ırough a wild desert, a most perverse and muti-
ous herd of people.

Faith was mother of that renowned patience, Chrys. tom.
hich exhausted Satan's quiver, spent all his artil- vii. p. 17.
ry, and wore out his invention in suggesting mis-
hiefs; *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, was the Job xix. 25.
ɔck, on which that unshakeable patience of Job was
ɔunded.

That pricked the ruddy stripling forward, naked
ıd unarmed, with undaunted heart and coun-
ɜnance, to invade the monster of Gath, that tower
f flesh, swelling with rage and pride, and all fenced

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with brass and steel; *Thou comest to me,* said he, *with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts:* there lay his confidence, thence sprung his admirable courage.

1 Sam. xvii. 45.

To *this* the bold attempts, and the glorious victories of Joshua, of Gideon, of Barak, of Jephtha, of Samson, of Jonathan, of the Maccabees, are worthily ascribed, who with small forces, upon great disadvantages, did assault, did vanquish mighty enemies and oppressors.

This inflamed the zeal of Elias, by which he *alone* did check and control the degenerate follies of his nation, surmounting the indignation of princes which favoured them; it fed him in the wilderness by the purveyance of ravens; it framed the wheels of that fiery chariot, which transported him into heaven.

1 Kings xviii. 36. xix. 20.

2 Kings ii. 11.

This made Jeremy, with like zeal and courage, dare to carry most unwelcome news and unpleasant messages to an outrageous people, not daunted by their angry menaces or cruel misusages; *his feet sunk into the mire,* but faith bore up his heart above all discouragement.

Jer. xxxviii. 4, 6.

This saved the conscience of those three brave youths clear from that impiety into which barbarous violence would have driven them, so that neither the fury of that great monarch nor his gaping furnace could terrify them into sin; faith putting into their mouths those manful words, *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if*

Dan. iii. 16, 17, 18.

ot, be it known unto thee, that we will not serve SERM.
by gods, nor worship the golden image which III.
hou hast set up: their faith carried them un-
aunted into the flames, and kept them untouched
ithin them; so that they became as gold not
asted, but tried and purified in the furnace.

Neither could a danger no less terrible scare the
oble Daniel from his devotions; his faith did *stop* Heb. xi. 33.
he lions' mouths; and, *he,* saith the text, *was* Dan. vi. 10,
aken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt 22, 23.
as found upon him, because he trusted in his
od.

Such exploits of spiritual prowess were achieved
y an Old Testament faith, relying upon God's at-
ibutes and providence, although wanting a clear
evelation of the promises, which then lay wrapped
p in mysteries and shadows; but more heroical
cts of fortitude and patience did the bright sun-
ine of grace and glory upon the minds of our
postles and primitive saints produce: animated by
ith, a little troop of them marched out with reso-
ution to attack all the powers of hell, and to beat
own the kingdom of darkness, to despatch all the
ejudices and errors of mankind, and to subdue the
orld to the obedience of Christ; so armed, success-
lly did they knock down and trample upon all op-
osition to their glorious designs; they defeated all
he secular power and policy, they baffled all the
it, the learning, the eloquence, which stood in
heir way, or gave them resistance; they triumphed
er persecutions, and in regard to all sufferings
ere more than conquerors; to forsake and forfeit Rom. viii.
l they had, was their gain; to *have nothing,* was 35. Eph. iii. 13.
heir wealth; to incur disgraces, was their glory;

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joy, quashing transitory satisfactions by the fears of endless torment.

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He who is persuaded, that by any damage here sustained for conscience toward God, he shall become a huge gainer, *receiving*, as the gospel promiseth, *an hundred fold, and inheriting eternal life*, what will he not gladly lose? will he not willingly put forth all he hath in this most profitable usury? will he not, as those Hebrews did, *take joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing that he hath in heaven a better and an enduring substance?* Matt. xix. 29. Luke xviii. 30. Phil. iii. 8. Heb. x. 34.

He who believeth, that in regard to any disgrace cast on him for his virtue, he shall be honoured by God, and crowned with heavenly glory, will he not in a manner be proud and ambitious of such disgrace? will he not, as the apostles did, *rejoice that he is counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ?* Matt. v. 12. Acts v. 41. 1 Pet. iv. 14.

He who trusteth, that for a little pains taken in God's service, he shall receive πολὺν μισθὸν, *abundant wages*, far exceeding the merit of his labour, will he not cheerfully bear any toil or drudgery therein? Matt. v. 12. Luke vi. 35. 1 Cor. iii. 8.

He who, with St. Paul, *computeth, that the light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed*; and that *those light momentany afflictions do work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory*; will they not indeed be light unto him; Rom. viii. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

SERMON IV.

OF JUSTIFYING FAITH.

ROM. v. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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THEREFORE; that word implies the text to be a conclusion (by way of inference, or of recapitulation) resulting from the precedent discourse; it is indeed the principal conclusion, which (as being supposed a peculiar and a grand part of the Christian doctrine, and deserving therefore a strong proof and clear vindication) St. Paul designed by several arguments to make good. Upon the words, being of such importance, I should so treat, as first to explain them, or to settle their true sense; then to make some practical application of the truths they contain.

As to the explicatory part, I should consider first, what the faith is, by which we are said to be justified; 2. what being justified doth import; 3. how by such faith we are so justified; 4. what the peace with God is, here adjoined to justification; 5. what relation the whole matter bears to our Lord Jesus Christ; or how through him being justified, we have peace with God; in the prosecution of which par-

ticulars it would appear, who the persons justified are, and who justifies us; with other circumstances incident. SERM. IV.

I shall at this time only insist upon the first particular, concerning the notion of faith proper to this place; in order to the resolution of which inquiry, I shall lay down some useful observations: and,

1. First, I observe, that *faith*, or belief, in the vulgar acception, doth signify (as we have it briefly described in Aristotle's Topics) a σφοδρὰ ὑπόληψις, *an earnest opinion* or persuasion of mind concerning the truth of some matter propounded. Such an opinion being produced by, or grounded upon some forcible reason, (either immediate evidence of the matter, or sense and experience, or some strong argument of reason, or some credible testimony;[a] for whatever we assent unto, and judge true upon any such grounds and inducements, we are commonly said to believe,) this is the popular acception of the word; and according thereto I conceive it usually signifies in holy scripture; which being not penned by masters of human art or science, nor directed to persons of more than ordinary capacities or improvements, doth not intend to use words otherwise than in the most plain and ordinary manner. Top. 4, 5.

Belief therefore in general, I suppose, denotes a

[a] Aut proba esse quæ credis; aut si non probas, quomodo credis? *Tertul. adv. Marc.* v. 1.

Ὅταν γάρ πως πιστεύῃ, καὶ γνώριμοι αὐτῷ ὦσιν αἱ ἀρχαὶ, ἐπίστανται. Arist. Eth. vi. 3.

Ἀριστοτέλης τὸ ἐπόμενον τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ κρῖμα ὡς ἀληθὲς, τὸ δέ τι πίστιν εἶναί φησι. Clem. Strom. ii. p. 287.

Ἔνιοι γὰρ πιστεύουσιν οὐδὲν ἧττον οἷς δοξάζουσιν, ἢ ἕτεροι οἷς ἐπίστανται. Arist. Eth. vii. 3.

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firm persuasion of mind concerning the truth of what is propounded; whether it be some one single proposition, (as when Abraham believed, that *God was able to perform what he had promised;* and Sarah, that *God, who had promised, was faithful,*) or some system of propositions, as when we are said to *believe God's word,* (that is, all which by his prophets was in his name declared;) to *believe the truth,* (that is, all the propositions taught in the true religion as so;) to *believe God's commandments,* (that is, the doctrines in God's law to be true, and the precepts thereof to be good;) to *believe the gospel,* (that is, to be persuaded of the truth of all the propositions asserted or declared in the gospel.)

Rom. iv. 21. Heb. xi. 19, 11. Ps. cvi. 24. lxxviii. 32. 2 Thess. ii. 12. Ps. cxix. 66. Mark i. 15. Phil. i. 27.

2. I observe, secondly, that whereas frequently some person, or single thing, is represented (*verbo tenus*) as the object of faith, this doth not prejudice, or in effect alter the notion I mentioned; for it is only a figurative manner of speaking, whereby is always meant the being persuaded concerning the truth of some proposition, or propositions, relating to that person or thing: for otherwise it is unintelligible how any incomplex thing, as they speak, can be the complete or immediate object of belief. Beside simple apprehension (or framing the bare idea of a thing) there is no operation of a man's mind terminated upon one single object; and belief of a thing surely implies more than a simple apprehension thereof: what it is, for instance, to believe this or that proposition about a man, or a tree, (that a man is such a kind of thing, that a tree hath this or that property,) is very easy to conceive; but the phrase believing a man, or a tree, (taken properly,

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or excluding figures,) is altogether insignificant and unintelligible: indeed to believe, πιστεύειν, is the effect τοῦ πεπεῖσθαι, of a persuasive argument, and the result of ratiocination; whence in scripture it is commended, or discommended, as implying a good or bad use of reason. The proper object of faith is therefore some proposition deduced from others by discourse; as it is said, that *many of the Samaritans believed in Christ because of the woman's word, who testified, that he told her all that ever she did;* or as St. Thomas *believed, because he saw;* or as when it is said, that *many believed on our Lord's name, beholding the miracles which he did:* when then, for example, the Jews are required to believe Moses, (or to believe in Moses, after the Hebrew manner of speaking,) it is meant, to be persuaded of the truth of what he delivered, as proceeding from Divine revelation; or to believe him to be what he professed himself, a messenger or prophet of God. So *to believe the prophets,* or in the prophets, (בְּנְבִיאָיו) was to be persuaded concerning the truth of what they uttered in God's name, (that the doctrines were true, the commands were to be obeyed, the threats and promises should be performed, the predictions should be accomplished: *to believe all which the prophets did say,* as our Saviour speaks; *to believe all things written in the prophets,* as St. Paul.) So to *believe God's works* (a phrase we have in the Psalms) signifies, to be persuaded, that those works did proceed from God, or were the effects of his good providence: to *believe in man* (that which is so often prohibited and dissuaded) denotes the being persuaded, that man in our need is able to relieve and succour us: lastly, *to believe in God* (a

John iv. 39. John xx. 29. John ii. 23. Exod. xiv. 31. xix. 9. John v. 45, &c. 2 Chron. xx. 20. Luke xxiv. 25. Acts xxiv. 14. Ps. lxxviii. 32. Jer. xvii. 5. xlvi. 25. Ps. cxviii. 8, &c.

SERM. IV. duty so often enjoined and inculcated) is to be persuaded, that God is true in whatever he says; faithful in performance of what he promises; perfectly wise, powerful, and good; able and willing to do us good: the being persuaded, I say, of all these propositions, or such of them as suit the present circumstances and occasion, is to believe in God: thus, in fine, to believe on a person or thing, is only a short expression (figuratively) denoting the being persuaded of the truth of some proposition relating, in one way or other, to that person or thing, (which way is commonly discernible by considering the nature, or state of such a person, or such a thing;) the use of which observation may afterward appear.

3. I observe, thirdly, that (as it is ordinary in like cases concerning the use of words) the word *belief* is by a kind of *synecdoche* (or *metonymy*, if you please) so commonly extended in signification, as, together with such a persuasion as we spoke of, to imply whatever by a kind of necessity, natural or moral, doth result from it; so comprehending those acts of will, those affections of soul, and those deeds, which may be presumed consequent upon such a persuasion: for instance, when God commanded Abraham to forsake his country, promising him a happy establishment in the land of Canaan, with a perpetual blessing upon his posterity; Abraham was persuaded concerning the power and fidelity of God, and concerning the truth of what was promised and foretold; in that persuasion his faith, according to the first, proper, and restrained sense, did consist: but because from such a persuasion (being sincere, and strong enough) there did naturally and duly

result a satisfaction, or acquiescence in the matter enjoined as best to be done; a choice and resolution to comply with God's appointment; an effectual obedience; a cheerful expectation of a good issue thereupon; therefore all those dispositions of soul and actions concurring become expressed by the name of faith, (that first persuasion being the principle and root of them:) for it is for his faith that he is highly commended; it is for it that he obtained so favourable an approbation and acceptance from God. Yet supposing Abraham to have had such a persuasion concerning God; and yet to have disliked what God required, or to have resolved against doing it, or to have indeed disobeyed, or to have disregarded the happy success; it is plain that Abraham as to the whole matter deserved rather much blame, than any commendation; and would not upon that account have had *righteousness imputed to him*, and have been *called the friend of God:* when therefore his *faith* is so magnified, that word comprehends not his bare persuasion only, but all those concomitants thereof, which if they had not gone along therewith, it had been a proof, that such a persuasion was not sincere, (not ἀνυπόκριτος πίστις, *an undissembled faith;* such as St. Paul commends in Timothy,) or not strong enough, (not ἀδιάκριτος πίστις, *an undoubting faith,*) but *a weak, a small, a dead,* an ineffectual faith; which come under blame and reproof; but the effect shewed, that he did not, as St. Paul says, ἀσθενεῖν τῇ πίστει, had not a weak, or sickly faith; nor *staggered at the promise of God;* but *was strong in faith, giving glory to God;* which he did not only in believing his word, but in suiting his affections, and yielding obedience thereto: (πίστει

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Rom. iv. 20.

James ii. 23.

1 Tim. i. 5. 2 Tim. i. 5. James iii. 17. Rom. iv. 20. xiv. 1. 1 Cor. viii. 10. Rom. iv. 19. Matt. vi. 30. viii. 26, &c. Jam. ii. 17, 20. Gal. v. 6. Heb. xi. 8.

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ὑπήκουσεν ἐξελθεῖν) *by faith he obeyed, so as to forsake his country,* says the apostle to the Hebrews; and faith thus taken is not only a single act of a man's understanding, or will, but a complex of many dispositions and actions, diffused through divers faculties of a man, denoting the whole complication of good dispositions and actions relating to one matter; which attend upon a true and earnest persuasion concerning it; right choice, submission, and satisfaction of mind, firm resolution, dutiful obedience, constant and cheerful hope, or the like.

4. I observe more nearly to our purpose, fourthly, that the faith here spoken of (being here and otherwhere put absolutely, or by itself, without any adjunct of limitation or distinction) is often set down with terms annexed thereto, explaining and determining it; being sometimes styled the *faith of Christ, of Jesus, of God,* (τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, τοῦ Θεοῦ,) sometimes *faith upon Christ,* (εἰς Χριστὸν, and ἐπὶ Χριστὸν,) *faith in Christ,* (ἐν Χριστῷ,) *faith to Christ,* to the Lord, to God, (πιστεύειν τῷ Χριστῷ, τῷ Κυρίῳ, τῷ Θεῷ,) *faith upon the name of Christ,* (εἰς ὄνομα,) *faith of his name,* (πίστις τοῦ ὀνόματος,) *faith to his name,* (τῷ ὀνόματι:) which phrases, all questionless denoting the same thing, do imply this faith to consist in being persuaded concerning the truth of some propositions chiefly relating to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, either as grounded upon his authority, or appertaining to his person. Now what such propositions are, we may learn from other expressions, descriptions, or circumlocutions declaring the nature and quality of this faith: it is sometimes called *the belief of the gospel,* (that is, of the whole system of doctrines, and laws, and promises, and pro-

Rom. iii. 3, 21, 26. Gal. ii. 16, 20. iii. 22. Phil. iii. 9. Rev. ii. 13. xiv. 12. εἰς, Acts xx. 21. xxiv. 24. xxvi. 18. Col. ii. 5, &c. ἐπὶ, Heb. vi. 1. Acts ix. 42. xxii. 19, &c. ἐν, Gal. iii. 26. 1 Tim. iii. 13. 2 Tim. iii. 15. Acts xiii. 39, &c. τῷ Χῳ. Acts v. 14. xvi. 34. xviii. 28. xxvii. 25. John v. 24. x. 37, 38. xiv. 11, &c.

εἰς ὄνομα, *John i. 2. ii. 23.* 1 John v. 13, &c. Acts iii. 16. τοῦ. 1 John iii. 23. τῷ.

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phecies taught, delivered, or declared by Christ, and his apostles: [a] *Repent*, said St. John the Baptist, *and believe the gospel*,) *the belief of the truth*, (that body of truth, signally so called, which was taught by the same authors,) the *acknowledgment of the same truth*, ([b] πιστὸς, and ἐπεγνωκὼς τὴν ἀλήθειαν are in St. Paul the same.) Equivalent to those descriptions of this faith are those expressions, which set it out by yielding assent (generally) to what our Lord Christ and his apostles taught, or to some chief points of their doctrine, inferring the rest; the [c] *believing*, [d] *hearing*, [e] *receiving the word of God*, of *Christ*, of the *apostles*, [f] the *receiving Christ's testimony*, and (which is the same) [g] *receiving Christ himself*; [h] *coming unto Christ*, (that is, as disciples to their Master, as servants to their Lord, as persons oppressed and enslaved to their Deliverer;) [i] *the believing* (and *knowing*) *that Jesus was sent by God, and came from him*; [k] the believing that Jesus was what he professed himself to be; [l] the *confessing*, that *Jesus Christ is come in the flesh*; *that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, he which should come into the world*; *the King of Israel*; *that God raised him from the dead*; by the belief of which one point, as involving the rest, St. Paul expresseth this faith: [m] *If thou*, saith he, *shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

[a] Mark i. 15. Phil. i. 27. [1] Pet. iv. 17. [2] Thess. ii. 12, 13. [b] [1] Tim. iv. 3. ii. 4. Tit. i. 1. Heb. x. 26. [1] Tim. ii. 4, &c. [c] John v. 46, 47. [d] John xii. 47. [e] John xii. 48. xvii. 8. Acts xi. 1. [f] John iii. 33. [g] John i. 12. xiii. 20. v. 43. [h] John vi. 37, 44, 65. v. 40. Matt. xi. 28. [i] Joh. xvii. 8. v. 24. vi. 29. xi. 42. xvi. 30. xvii. 21. [k] John viii. 24. xiii. 19. [l] 1 John iv. 2, 15. v. 1, 5. John iv. 42. i. 49. xx. 31. Acts viii. 37. [m] Rom. x. 9. Ὁ ἀκούσας παρὰ πατρὸς καὶ μαθών, John vi. 45.

The result, upon considering all which expressions declaratory of the nature of this faith (for this surely is not different from that, which is so commonly otherwhere represented in our Saviour's and his apostles' discourses and writings, as a great duty

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required of us; as a virtue (or act of virtue) highly commendable, as an especial instrument of our salvation, as a necessary condition prerequisite to our partaking the benefits and privileges by Divine favour conferred on Christians)—the result, I say, is this, that by this faith (as to the first and primary sense thereof) is understood the being truly and firmly persuaded in our minds, that Jesus was what he professed himself to be, and what the apostles testified him to be; the Messias, by God designed, foretold, and promised to be sent into the world, to redeem, govern, instruct, and save mankind; our Redeemer and Saviour, our Lord and Master, our King and Judge; the great High Priest, and Prophet of God; the being assured of these, and all other propositions connexed with these; or, in short, the being thoroughly persuaded of the truth of that gospel which was revealed and taught by Jesus and his apostles. That this notion is true, those descriptions of this faith, and phrases expressing it, do sufficiently shew; the nature and reason of the thing doth confirm the same; for that such a faith is, in its kind and order, apt and sufficient to promote God's design of saving us, to render us capable of God's favour; to purge our hearts, and work that change of mind, which is necessary in order to the obtaining God's favour, and enjoying happiness; to produce that obedience, which God requires of us, and without which we cannot be saved; these things are the natural results of such a persuasion concerning those truths; as natural, as the desire and pursuit of any good doth arise from the clear apprehension thereof, or as the shunning of any mischief doth follow from the like apprehension: as a persuasion

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that wealth is to be got thereby, makes the merchant to undergo the dangers and pains of a long voyage, (verifying that, *Impiger extremos currit mercator ad Indos, Per mare pauperiem fugiens, per saxa, per ignes;*) as the persuasion that health may thereby be recovered, engages a man not only to take down the most unsavoury potions, but to endure cuttings and burnings, (*ut valeas ferrum patieris et ignes;*) as a persuasion, that refreshment is to be found in a place, doth effectually carry the hungry person thither: so a strong persuasion that Christian religion is true, and the way of obtaining happiness, and of escaping misery, doth naturally produce a subjection of heart, and an obedience thereto; and accordingly we see the highest of those effects which the gospel offers, or requires, are assigned to this faith, as results from it, or adjuncts thereof. Regeneration; *Whosoever*, saith St. John, *believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.* 1 John v. 1. Spiritual union with God; *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God: If what ye have heard from the beginning abide in you, ye shall also abide in the Father and the Son.* 1 John iv. 15. 1 John ii. 24. The obtaining God's love; *The Father loves you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came from God.* John xvi. 27. Victory over the world; *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he who believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* Vid. 2 Thes. ii. 13. Eph. i. 13. Acts xv. 7, 9. 1 John v. 5. Freedom from spiritual slavery, and becoming true disciples of Christ; *If ye abide in my word, ye are truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.* John viii. 31, 32. Obtaining everlasting life; *He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me*, (that is, who believeth John v. 24.

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my word, which is indeed the word of God, who sent me, and in whose name I speak,) *hath ever-*
John xx. 31. *lasting life.* And, *These things were written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing it you may have life in*
2 John 9. *his name.* Interest in God and Christ; *He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he* (οὗτος) *hath*
John vi. 47. iii. 36. xv. 16. *the Father and the Son. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth upon me hath eternal life.* Rising with Christ, (that is, as to capacity
Col. ii. 12. and right;) *Buried with him in baptism, where in you are risen with him through faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead.*
Rom. x. 9. Being saved; *Whoever confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus to be the Son of God, and in his heart believes that God raised him from the dead, shall be saved.* Lastly, being justified; for, St. Paul
Rom. x. 10. adjoins, *a man believeth* (in the manner before mentioned) *to righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made to salvation.* So we see, that the chief of those excellent benefits, to the procuring of which faith (however understood) is anywise conducible, or requisite, do belong to the persuasion concerning evangelical truths. We may also observe in the history concerning our Lord, and his apostles' proceedings toward persons, whom they had converted to Christianity, and did admit to a participation of the privileges thereof, that no other faith was by them required in order thereto: upon such a persuasion appearing, they received them into the church, baptized them, pronounced unto them an absolution from their sins, and a reception into God's favour. This was the faith of Martha, which gave
John xi. 26. her interest in the promise of eternal life: *Every*

one, said our Saviour to her, *living, and believing* SERM. IV.
in me, shall never die: Dost thou believe this? She saith unto him, Yes, Lord, I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. This was the faith, Matt. xvi. 16, 17. John vi. 69.
for which our Saviour commends St. Peter, and pronounces him happy. Upon appearance of this faith, St. Peter baptized and admitted into the church the three thousand persons whom he had converted. (*Then*, says the text, *they who gladly* (or willingly) *received his word* (that is, were persuaded of the truth of that doctrine, which is before set down concerning our Lord) *were baptized; and the same day were added* (to the church) *about three thousand souls.*) Upon the like faith the Samaritans were baptized, ὅτε ἐπίστευσαν τῷ Φιλίππῳ, *when they gave credence to Philip's doctrine.*) And upon the same account did the same evangelist say it was lawful to baptize the Eunuch, and accordingly did perform it: *If,* saith Philip, *thou believest with thy whole heart, it is lawful,* (or thou mayest be baptized.) *He answering said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. So he baptized him.* This was the faith, upon which St. Paul baptized Lydia, *when she had yielded assent unto* (so προσέχειν doth import in the Acts; not only προσέχειν νοῦν to yield attention, but προσέχειν πίστιν to give assent unto) *the things spoken by St. Paul.* Thus also of those Jews in another place of the Acts, when St. Paul had *opened and alleged, out of the scriptures, that Christ was to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, and that Jesus was the Christ,* it is said τινὲς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπείσθησαν, καὶ προσεκληρώθησαν, *were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas,* (that

οἱ ἀσμένως ἀποδεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον. Acts ii. 41.

Acts viii. 12.

Acts viii. 37, 38.

Acts xvi. 14, 15.

Acts xvii. 3, 4.

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is, were received into Christian communion with them.) The same is intimated in other passages of the apostolical history; by all which it appears, that the apostles' method was to declare and inculcate the main points of the Christian history and doctrine, attesting to the one, and proving the other by testimonies and arguments proper to that purpose; and whoever of their hearers declared himself persuaded of the truth of what they taught, that he did heartily assent thereto, and resolved to profess and practise accordingly, him, without more to do, they presently baptized, and instated him in the privileges appertaining to Christianity; or, in St. Paul's language, did justify them, according to their subordinate manner, as the ministers of God. And thus did the primitive church practise after the apostles; as Justin the Martyr fully relates of it:—*ὅσοι ἂν πεισθῶσι, καὶ πιστεύωσιν ἀληθῆ ταῦτα τὰ ὑφ' ἡμῶν διδασκόμενα, καὶ λεγόμενα εἶναι, καὶ ποιεῖν οὕτως δύνασθαι ὑπισχῶνται,* &c.—*ἄγονται ὑφ' ἡμῶν ἔνθα ὕδωρ ἐστὶ, καὶ τρόπῳ ἀναγεννήσεως, ὃν καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοὶ ἀνεγεννήθημεν, ἀναγεννῶνται* —*Apol.* 2. *Whoever*, saith he, *are persuaded, and do believe these things by us taught, and said to be true, and undertake that they can live so according to them;—are brought thither, where water is, and are regenerated after the same manner as we have been regenerated.* I further add, that even this faith is expressed to be the effect of divine grace and inspiration; for when St. Peter had confessed that *Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God*, our Saviour tells him, *that flesh and blood had not revealed that unto him, but his Father in heaven;* and, *No man*, St. Paul tells us, *can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost:* and, *Every*

Acts ix. 20. xvi. 32. xvii. 11, 12.

Matt. xvi. 16, 17. 1 Cor. xii. 3. ii. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 19. 1 John iv. 2. (Eph. i. 17, 18.

pirit, which confesseth Jesus Christ to have been SERM. *me in the flesh, is of God,* saith St. John. So IV.
at even this is a faith, in respect to which the 2 Cor. iv. 13.
oly Ghost is called *the Spirit of faith,* which is Gal. v. 22.
e *fruit of the Spirit,* and *the gift of God;* that Eph. ii. 8.
hich *no man can* have without *God's drawing* Phil. i. 29.
m, and teaching him; *No man can come unto me,* John vi. 44,
cept the Father, that hath sent me, shall draw 45.
m (ἑλκύσῃ αὐτόν). *Every one that hath heard from e Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me:* to hich it is ordinarily required, that God should *open e heart,* as he did Lydia's heart, *to attend and* Acts xvi. *sent unto what St. Paul taught:* neither doth the 14. ripture, as I conceive, attribute any thing unto ith, which doth not agree to this notion.

We might lastly adjoin, that this was the common id current notion of faith among the ancient Chris- ans; neither do we, I suppose, meet with any other i their writings; all which things do abundantly nfirm the truth thereof.

5. But I must further observe particularly, (in rrespondence to what was before more generally bserved,) that this faith doth not only denote pre- sely and abstractedly such acts of mind, such pinions and persuasions concerning the truth of atters specified, but doth also connote[b] and imply ndeed comprehend according to the meaning of ose who use the word) such acts of will, as, sup- osing those persuasions to be real and complete, are aturally consequent upon them, and are in a manner

[b] *Salv. de Provid.* iv. 1. Cum hoc sit hominis Christiani fides, leliter Christi mandata servare, fit absque dubio, ut nec fidem abeat qui infidelis est, nec Christum credat, qui Christi mandata nculcat, &c.

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necessarily coherent with them; a firm resolution constantly to profess and adhere unto the doctrine, of which a man is so persuaded; to obey all the laws and precepts, which it contains; forsaking in open profession, and in real practices, all principles, rules, customs inconsistent with those doctrines and laws; that which is called *conversion*, or *returning to the Lord*, (that is, leaving a course of rebellion, and disobedience to those laws, which the Lord in the gospel commands, and resolvedly betaking themselves to the observance of them,) πολύς τε ὄχλος πιστεύσας ἐπέστρεψεν ἐπὶ τὸν Κύριον, *a great multitude*, it is said, *believing, did return unto the Lord;* their faith did carry with it such a conversion. Hence this faith is styled πειθαρχεῖν Θεῷ, *to obey God's command;* ὑπακούειν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, *to obey the gospel;* ὑπακούειν τῇ πίστει, *to obey the faith;* ὑποταγὴ τῆς ὁμολογίας εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, (*subjection of professing the gospel of Christ,*) *with purpose of heart to adhere unto God; stipulation of a good conscience toward God,* (that which St. Peter intimates, as a necessary concomitant of baptism, it being a sincere undertaking, and engaging one's self to obey God's commandments;) in fine, to *repent;* which is either adequately the same thing with faith, or included therein, according to the apostolical meaning of the word; for that remission of sins, which is sometime made the consequent of faith, is otherwhere expressly annexed to repentance: the sum of the gospel our Saviour himself expresses by the preaching in his name *repentance, and remission of sins in all nations:* and, *Repent,* St. Peter preached, *and let every one of you be baptized:* and, *Repent,* said he again, *and return, that your sins may be blotted out:* and, *Then*

Acts xi. 21. Vid. Acts ix. 35. xiv. 15. xxvi. 18. Acts v. 32. 1 Thes. i. 8. Rom. i. 6. vi. 17. xvi. 16. 2Cor. ix. 13. Acts xi. 23. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Luke xxiv. 47.

Acts ii. 58. iii. 19. xvii. 30.

Acts xi. 18.

to the Gentiles, say those in the Acts, *hath God given repentance unto life*; which signifies the same with that other expression concerning the same persons, *God's having purified their hearts by faith*; in which places I take repentance to import the same thing with faith; being in effect nothing else, but sincere embracing Christian religion. Now the word *faith* is thus extended (beyond its natural and primary force) to comprehend such a compliance of will, or purpose of obedience, because this doth naturally arise from a persuasion concerning the truth of the gospel, if it be real and strong enough, in that degree, which Christianity requires, and supposes to the effects mentioned in the gospel; if it be ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ, *in the heart*, (or a hearty faith,) as St. Paul speaks; if it be such as Philip exacts of the Eunuch, *a belief* ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας, *from the whole heart*; if it have that due plerophory, that stability, that solidity, which the apostles speak of; for a weak, faint, slight, ill-grounded, ill-rooted opinion concerning the truth of the gospel, (such as those in another case had, whom our Saviour rebuked with a τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι; *Why are ye fearful, O ye small in faith?* such as St. Peter had, when our Saviour said to him, ὀλιγόπιστε, εἰς τί ἐδίστασας; *O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt?* which faith could not keep them nor him from sinking; not such as those had, who *heard the word, and gladly received it; but wanted root, so that, when persecution or affliction did arise for the word, they were presently scandalized*; not such a faith as those many rulers had, who are said to have *believed in Jesus, but for fear of the Pharisees did not confess him*; not such as Simon Magus had, who is said to have

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Acts xv. 9.

Rom. x. 6.

Acts viii. 37. Heb. x. 22, 23. vi. 11, 12. 1 Thes. i. 5 Col. i. 23. ii. 5. 7. iv. 12. 2 Cor. viii. 7. Matt. viii. 26. xiv. 31.

Matt. xiii. 20.

John xii. 42.

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believed Philip, but to no good effect, ***because his heart was not right before God;*** he having not thoroughly resolved to obey the gospel; not such as Agrippa had, whom St. Paul had *almost persuaded to be a Christian*)—these sorts of faith are, in comparison to that we speak of, but equivocally so called: it includes a firm resolution to perform carefully all the duties enjoined to Christians, to undergo patiently all the crosses incident to Christianity; it is the same with becoming a disciple of Christ, which a man cannot be without renouncing all other interests and concernments, without *denying one's self, forsaking all and following him;* without *taking his yoke upon him, going after, and bearing his cross;* it supposes (as our Saviour also teaches us) that a man hath cast up with himself the gain and loss he is like to receive by the bargain, and being satisfied therein, to contract *bona fide* with God; that a man hath weighed all the pains and dangers he shall be put upon by entering into this warfare, and so resolvedly to adventure upon it: it is productive of *love to the truth,* yea of love to God, and charity to men, without which all faith is unprofitable and ineffectual, as St. Paul teaches us. In short, this faith is nothing else but a true, serious, resolute embracing Christianity; not only being persuaded that all the doctrines of Christ are true, but submitting to his will and command in all things [c].

Acts viii. 12, 21. Acts xxvi. 28. Matt. x. 38. xi. 29. Luke ix. 23. xiv. 26, 27. xvi. 24. Matt. xiii. 44, 45. Luke xiv. 28, 31. 2 Thess. ii. 10. (1 Cor. xiii. 2. Gal. v. 6.)

But to prevent mistakes, and remove objections, I shall yet further observe,

That this faith hath, although not an adequate, yet a peculiar respect unto that part of Christian

[c] Credere se in Christum quomodo dicit, qui non facit quod Christus facere præcepit? *Cypr. de Un. Ec.*

truth, which concerns the merciful intentions of God toward mankind, and the gracious performances of our Saviour in order to the accomplishing them; the promises of pardon to our sins, and restoral into God's favour upon the terms propounded in the gospel, of sincere faith and repentance; whence the gospel is called λόγος καταλλαγῆς, (*the word of reconciliation;*) and this is expressed as a summary of the apostolic ministry or message; that *God was in Christ reconciling the world, not imputing their sins:* and this our Saviour did order in especial manner to be preached in his name; this accordingly they did mainly propound and inculcate; that God had *exalted Jesus to his right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins; that he should receive remission of sins, whoever did believe in his name: Let it be known unto you, brethren, that by this man remission of sins is* **denounced unto you;* (so did they preach.) Whence this faith is (*signanter*) called *belief in the blood of Christ:* indeed, of all Christian doctrines, this is most proper first to be propounded and persuaded, as the most attractive to the belief of the rest; most encouraging and comfortable to men; most apt to procure glory to God by the illustration of his principal attributes, his justice and his goodness; most suitable to the state of things between God and man; for men being in a state of rebellion and enmity toward God, in order to their reducement and recovery thence, it was most proper, that in the first place an overture of mercy and pardon should be made, an act of oblivion should be passed and propounded to them: yet are not these propositions and promises the adequate or entire object of

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2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

Luke xxiv. 47.

Acts v. 31.

Acts x. 43.

Acts xiii. 38.

* καταγγέλλεται.

Rom. iii. 25.

Rom. iii. 26. xv. 9. Eph. i. 6.

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this faith; for other articles of faith are often propounded in a collateral order with those; yea sometimes (as in the case of the Eunuch) others are expressed, when that is not mentioned, but only understood: neither if any one should believe all the doctrines of that kind, if he did not withal believe that Jesus is his Lord, and shall be his Judge; that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, and a judgment to come, with the like fundamental verities of our religion, would he be a believer in this sense.

Acts viii. 37. Rom. x. 9.

7. I observe further, that this faith doth relate only to propositions revealed by God[d], (or at least deduced from principles of reason, such as are, that there is a God; that God is good, veracious, and faithful; that our religion is true in the gross; that the holy scriptures were written by divine inspiration; which propositions we believe upon rational grounds and motives,) not unto other propositions concerning particular matter of fact, subject to private conscience or experience; nor to any conclusions depending upon such propositions. For instance, it is a part of this faith, to believe that God is merciful and gracious, that he bears good-will unto, and is disposed to pardon, every penitent sinner; or (which is all one) that supposing a man doth believe, and hath repented, God doth actually love him, and doth forgive his sins; this is, I say, indeed a part of the faith we speak of, its object being part of the gospel revealed unto us: but the being persuaded that God doth love me, or hath pardoned my sins, or that I am in a state of favour

[d] Fides dicit, parata sunt magna et incomprehensibilia dona a Deo fidelibus suis: dicit spes, mihi illa bona servantur; charitas dicit, curro ego ad illa. *Bern.*

with God, may, as my circumstances may be, not be my duty; however it is no part of this faith, but a matter of opinion, dependent upon private experience: for such a persuasion must be grounded upon my being conscious to myself of having truly and thoroughly repented, (this being required by God, as a necessary condition toward my obtaining pardon, and his favour;) of having performed which duty I may presume, when it is false, (and therefore cannot then be obliged to believe it,) and may doubt, when it is true; and that not without good reason, considering the blindness and fallibility of man's mind, and that man's *heart is deceitful above all things*, as the prophet tells us: upon which account then a man may not be obliged to have such a persuasion. It is indeed a great fault to doubt, or distrust, on that hand which concerns God; about his goodness, his truth, his wisdom, or power: but it is not always (perhaps not commonly) blameable to question a man's own qualifications, or his own performances, whether in kind or degree they be answerable to what God requires[e]; *that* is inconsistent with true faith, but *this* not: we cannot have any good religious affections toward God, if we do not take him to be our gracious Father; but we may have in us such affections toward him, and he may be favourably disposed toward us, when we suspect ourselves to be untoward children, *unworthy* (as the prodigal son in the gospel confessed himself) *to be called the sons of God*. The centurion in the gos-

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Jer. xvii. 9.

Luke xv. 19.

[e] Qui perseveraverit usque ad finem, hic salvus erit; quicquid ante finem fuerit, gradus est, quo ad fastigium salutis ascenditur, non terminus, quo jam culminis summa teneatur, &c. *Cypr. de Unit. Eccl.* p. 259.

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pel did confess himself *unworthy that Christ should enter under his roof:* but he declared his persuasion, that *if Christ should only speak a word, his child should be healed;* and our Saviour thereupon professes, *that he had not found so much faith in Israel.* To the blind men imploring his relief, our Saviour puts the question, *Do ye believe that I can do this? They answered, Yes, Lord:* he required no more of them; but said thereupon, *According to your faith let it be done unto you.* And that for which Abraham the father of believers, his faith is represented so acceptable is, his firm persuasion concerning God's power; *because,* saith St. Paul, *he had a plerophory, that what was promised, God was able to perform;* by doing thus, he was a believer, and thereby *gave glory to God,* as the apostle there adds. If we do not then distrust God, we may have faith, although we distrust ourselves. It is true (generally and absolutely speaking) we should endeavour so fully and clearly to repent, and to perform whatever God requires of us, that we may thence acquire a good hope concerning our state; we should labour, that *our hearts may not condemn us* of any presumptuous transgressing our duty, and consequently, that we may become in a manner confident of God's favour toward us: but when we have done the best we can, even when we are not conscious of any enormous fault or defect, yet we may consider with St. Paul, *that we are not thereby justified,* but abide liable to the more certain cognizance and judgment of God, *who seeth not as man seeth;* that we are not capable, or competent judges of ourselves; nor are ever the better for thinking well of ourselves; since, as St. Paul tells us again, *he is not*

Matt. viii. 8, 10.

Matt. ix. 28, 29. Vid. Matt. xv. 27.

Rom. iv. 21, 11. Heb. xi. 19. πληροφορηθείς.

Rom. iv. 21.

Col. i. 23. Heb. iii. 6. 1 John iii. 21.

1 Cor. iv. 4.

1 Sam. xvi. 7.

2 Cor. x. 18.

approved that commends himself, but whom the SERM. IV.
Lord commendeth: for that, *delicta sua quis intelligit? who can thoroughly understand and scan* Ps. xix. 12.
his own errors? Who can say, I have made my Prov. xx. 9.
heart clean, I am purged of my sin? Who can know, (if the Psalmist implieth that he could not,) until God hath searched him and discovers it, *whether there be any secret way of wickedness in him;* Ps. cxxxix. 24.
whether he be sufficiently grieved for having offended God, fully humbled under the sense of his sins, thoroughly resolved to amend his life? However, it often happens that true faith and sincere repentance are in degree very defective; in which case we may, without prejudicing the truth of our faith, suspect the worst; yea, I conceive it is more safe and commendable so to do[f]: if in any, then chiefly, I suppose, in this most important and critical affair, the Wise Man's sentence doth hold, *Blessed is he that* Prov. xxviii. 14.
feareth always; so feareth, as thereby to become 2 Pet. i. 10.
more solicitous and watchful over his heart and ways; more careful and studious of securing his salvation finally, to render his calling and election in the event more firm, and in his apprehension more hopeful. I dare say, of two persons otherwise alike qualified, [g]he that upon this ground (fearing his own unworthiness, or the defect of his performances) is most doubtful of his state, doth stand really upon better terms with God; as the Pharisee, who *justified himself,* and took himself to be in a very good condition, was indeed *less justified* (somewhat the Luke xviii. 14. x. 29.

Μὴ ὑψηλοφρόνει, ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ. Rom. xi. 20.

[f] Nunquam est de salute propria mens secura sapientis. *Silv. ad Eccl. Cath.* lib. ii.

[g] Quem censeas digniorem, nisi emendatiorem; quem emendatiorem, nisi timidiorem? *Tertull. de Pœnit.* 6.

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less for that conceit of his) than the poor Publican, who was sensible of his own unworthiness, and condemned himself in his own opinion: the great danger lies on that hand of being presumptuous, arrogant, and self-conceited, which God hates; and on this hand there usually lies humility, modesty, and poverty of spirit, which God loves. As *every high thing* (every elevation of mind) *is abominable in God's sight*, and he *depresseth him that exalteth himself*; so lowly thoughts are gracious in God's regard; *he raiseth him that humbleth himself, and is lowly in his own eyes:* he hath an especial respect to him *that is of a poor and contrite heart, and trembleth at his word.* It is a property of good men, (being such as often reflect upon their own hearts and ways, and thence discern the defects in them,) with Jacob, to think themselves *less than the least of God's mercies;* with David, to be *afraid of God's judgments;* it is their duty to pass the time of *their sojourning here in fear, to work out their salvation with fear and trembling.* I may add, that sometime a person much loving God, and much beloved of him, may be like *a pelican of the wilderness, and an owl of the desert;* from an apprehension of God's anger, may have *no soundness in his flesh, nor rest in his bones, by reason of his sin;* may have his *spirit overwhelmed, and his heart within him desolate;* may fear that his sins have *separated between him and his God;* and that he is *forsaken of God; God hiding his face, and withdrawing the light of his countenance,* he may be *troubled,* may have *his soul cast down, and disquieted within him;* may be ready to say, *I am cut off from before thine eyes:* even such a man, in

Luke xvi. 15. xviii. 14.
2 Sam. xxii. 28.
Psal. xxxiv. 18.
Isa. lxvi. 2. lvii. 15.
Gen. xxxii. 10.
Psal. cxix. 120.
Phil. ii. 12.
1 Pet. i. 17.
2 Pet. i. 10.
Psal. cii. 6.
Ps. xxxviii. 3.
Ps. cxliii. 4.
Jer. v. 25.
Ps. xxii. 1. xxx. 7. lxxxix. 46. xlii. 5. lxix. 16. xxxi. 22.

such a state of distress and doubt, may continue a believer; he retaining honourable thoughts of God, (in which the worth and virtue of true faith consisteth,) although dejected by the conscience of his own infirmities, by suspicion of his own indispositions, and consequently by the fear of God's displeasure. SERM. IV.

Further, [h] that this faith doth not essentially include a respect to such particular propositions, or does not (as many in these two latter ages have deemed and taught) consist in our being persuaded that our sins are pardoned, or our persons just in God's esteem; that we are acceptable to God, and stand possessed of his favour, it appears from hence, that faith is in holy scripture represented in nature precedaneous to God's benevolence, (especial I mean, not general benevolence, for that prevents all acts and dispositions of us, or in us,) to his conferring remission of sins, accepting and justifying our persons; it is a previous condition, without which (as the apostle teaches us) *it is impossible to please God;* it is a reason of God's love, (*The Father,* saith our Lord, *loves you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came from God;*) it is a ground of divine acceptation and good-will, (*Abraham believed God,* saith St. James, *and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God;*) it is a mean, or instrument, (so it is constantly represented,) by which we are justified,

Heb. xi. 6.

John xvi. 27.

James ii. 23.

[h] Sed fide hoc beneficium accipiendum est, qua credere nos oportet, quod propter Christum nobis donentur remissio peccatorum et justificatio. *Conf. Aug.*

Quum justificamur fide, vult te intueri filium Dei sedentem ad dextram Patris, Mediatorem, interpellantem pro nobis, et statuere, quod tibi remittantur peccata; quod justus, id est acceptus reputeris. *Melanct. Loc. com.* p. 418.

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obtain God's favour, and the remission of our sins; and therefore is in order of nature previous and prerequisite thereto; it is therefore required before baptism, in which remission of sins is consigned: God justifies, accepts, and pardons him, that hath been impious, but not him that is an infidel. This is the method plainly declared in scripture; wherefore if faith implies a persuasion that God hath remitted our sins, it must imply an antecedent faith, (even a justifying faith, antecedent to itself,) or that we believe before we believe, and are justified before we are justified. I add, that by this notion many, or most (I will not, after the council of Trent, say all) humble and modest Christians are excluded from being believers; even all those who are not confident of their own sincerity and sanctity, and consequently cannot be assured of their standing in God's favour: and on the other side, the most presumptuous and fanatical sort of people are most certainly the truest and strongest believers, as most partaking of the most essential property thereof, according to that notion; for of all men living, such are wont to be most assured of God's especial love unto them, and confident that their sins are pardoned: experience sufficiently shews this to be true, and consequently that such a notion of faith cannot be good.

Much less is that notion of faith right, which defines faith to be a firm and certain knowledge of God's eternal good-will toward us particularly, and that we shall be saved[i]; which notion (taught in

[i] *Calv. Inst.* lib. vii. §. 7. et 28. compar. Nunc justa fidei definitio nobis constabit, si dicamus esse divinæ erga nos benevolentiæ firmam certamque cognitionem, &c.

Jam

he beginning of the Reformation, by a man of SERM. IV.
reatest name and authority) was thus lately ex-
ressed by the professors of Leyden in their *Sy-
opsis purioris Theologiæ:* [k] *Faith* (they say in
heir definition thereof) *is a firm assent—by which
very believer, with a certain trust resting in God,
s persuaded not only that remission of sins is in
eneral promised to them who believe, but is granted
o himself particularly, and eternal righteousness,
nd from it life, by the mercy of God,* &c. Which
notion seems to be very uncomfortable, as rejecting
very man from the company of believers, who is
either ignorant or doubtful, not only concerning his
present, but his final state; who hath not, not
only a good opinion, but a certain knowledge of his
present sincerity and sanctity; yea, not only of this,
but of his future constant perseverance therein: so
that if a man be not sure he hath repented, he is
(according to this notion) sure that he hath not re-
pented, and is no believer. How many good people
must this doctrine discourage and perplex! To re-
move it, we may consider, 1. that it altogether in-
verts and confounds the order of things declared in
scripture, wherein faith (as we observed before) is
set before obtaining God's good-will, as a prerequi-
site condition thereto; and is made a means of sal-
vation, (*without faith it is impossible to please God:* Heb. xi. 6.
By grace we are saved, through faith.) And if Eph. ii. 8. Rom. x. 9.

Jam in divina benevolentia quam respicere dicitur fides, intelligimus salutis ac vitæ æternæ possessionem obtineri, &c.

[k] —firmus assensus—quo certa fiducia in Deo acquiescens firmiter unusquisque fidelis statuit, non solum promissum esse credentibus in genere remissionem peccatorum, sed sibi in particulari concessum, æternamque justitiam, et ex ea vitam, &c.

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we must believe before God loves us, (with such a love as we speak of,) and before we can be saved; then must we know that we believe, before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved; and consequently we must indeed believe before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved. But this doctrine makes the knowledge of God's love and of salvation in nature antecedent to faith, as being an essential ingredient into it; which is preposterous. Consider this circle of discourse: a man cannot know that he believes, without he does believe; this is certain: a man cannot know that he shall be saved, without knowing he doth believe; this is also certain: for upon what ground, from what evidence can he know his salvation, but by knowing his faith? But again backward: a man, say they, cannot believe (and consequently not know that he believes) without being assured of his salvation. What an inextricable maze and confusion is here! This doctrine indeed doth make the knowledge of a future event to be the cause of its being future; it supposes God to become our friend (as Abraham was by his faith) by our knowing that he is our friend; it makes us to obtain a reward by knowing that we shall obtain it; it supposes the assurance of our coming to a journey's end, to be the way of getting thither; which who can conceive intelligible, or true? Our Saviour doth indeed tell us, that it is *the way to life* everlasting (or conducible to the attaining it) *to know* (that is, to believe, as it is interpreted in the 8th verse of that chapter; for what upon good grounds we are persuaded of, or judge true, we may be said to know) *the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent:* but he doth

James ii. 23.

John xvii. 3, 8.

not say, it is life everlasting (or conducible to the obtaining it) to know, that we shall have life everlasting; that were somewhat strange to say. St. Peter exhorts us to *use diligence to make our calling and election sure*, (or firm, and stable:) but he doth not bid us know it to be sure. If we did know it to be so, what need should we have to make it so? yea, how could we make it so? He doth not enjoin us to be sure of it in our opinion, but to secure it in the event by sincere obedience, and a holy life; by so impressing this persuasion upon our minds, so rooting the love of God and his truth in our hearts, that no temptation may be able to subvert our faith, or to pluck out our charity. SERM. IV. 2 Pet. i. 10.

2. This notion plainly supposes the truth of that doctrine, that no man being once in God's favour, can ever quite lose it; the truth of which I shall not contest now, (nor allege the many clear passages of scripture, nor the whole tenor of the gospel, nor the unanimous consent of all Christendom for fifteen hundred years against it,) but shall only take notice, that their notion of faith necessarily presupposing the truth of this doctrine, is yet thereby everted: for it follows thence, that no man, who doth not assent to that doctrine, is, or can be a believer: for he that is not assured of the truth of that opinion (although we suppose him assured of his present sincerity, and being in a state of grace) cannot know that he shall be saved: so that only such as agree with them in that opinion can be believers, which is somewhat hard, or rather very absurd. And to aggravate this inconvenience, I adjoin, 3. that, according to their notion, scarce any man, (except some

SERM. IV. have had an especial revelation concerning their salvation,) before the late alterations in Christendom, was a believer; for before that time it hardly appears, that any man did believe, as they do, that a man cannot fall from grace; and therefore scarce any man could be assured, that he should be saved; and therefore scarce any man could be a believer in their sense.

De Corr. et Gr. cap. 9. et 13. De bon. Persev. cap. viii. 13. St. Augustine himself (whose supposed patronage stands them in so much stead upon other occasions) hath often affirmed, that divers have had given them that faith, that charity, that justification, wherein if they had died, they should have been saved; who yet were not saved: which persons surely, when they were in that good state, (admitting them, according to St. Augustine's supposal, to have been in it,) were as capable of knowing their salvation, as any other man can be; yea, St. Augustine himself (considering that *accidere cuiquam quod potest, cuivis potest*, what was another man's case might be his, there being no ground of difference) could not be more sure of his own salvation at any time, than such persons were at that time: according to St. Augustine's judgment therefore, no man could know that he should be saved, (his salvation depending upon perseverance, which in his opinion not being given to all, must as to our knowledge, whatever it might be in respect to God's decree, be contingent and uncertain)—it follows, I say, upon his suppositions, yea he expressly affirms it; lib. ii. de bono Pers. *Itaque*, says he, *utrum quisque hoc (perseverantiæ) munus acceperit, quamdiu hanc vitam ducit, incertum est. Whether any have re-*

his gift of perseverance while he leads SERM.
is uncertain. [o] Wherefore St. Augustine IV.
t be assured of his own salvation; and
(according to these men's sense) he was
:r, no Christian; which I suppose yet they
assert, though it be so plainly consequent
)wn position. I might, 4, ask of them, if
ould confess ingenuously, that although he
for mercy from God in that day, yet that
ot assured of his salvation, whether such
should be rejected from Christian commu-
no believer. It seems, according to their
faith, he should; since by his own (in this
infallible) judgment, it is notorious that
ng no believer, hath no title unto, or in-
the privileges of Christianity: but this pro-
vould very much depopulate the church,
h from it, I fear, the best (the most hum-
iodest, yea the wisest and soberest) mem-
:of.

much I think suffices for the removal of
harsh notion, to say no worse of it.

is another more new than that, devised by
io perceived the inconveniences of the for-
ins, yet, it seems, did affect to substitute
fine one in their room,) which if it be not
false, yet is, it seems, more obscure and in-
: is this; that faith is not an assent to pro-

Vid. Ames. Med. lib. i. cap. 27. Christus adæquatum objectum. *Ames.*

sibi quisque ita notus est, ut sit de sua crastina con-
:curus. *Aug. Ep.* 121. *ad Probam.*
indo, et in hac vita nulla anima possit esse secura.

vivimus, in certamine sumus, et quamdiu in certa-
certa est victoria. *Hier. adv. Pelag.* ii. 2.

SERM. IV. positions of any kind, but a recumbency, leaning, resting, rolling upon, adherency to (for they express themselves in these several terms, and others like them) the person of Christ; or, an apprehending and applying to ourselves the righteousness of Christ; his person itself, and his righteousness, as simple incomplex things; not any proposition (that they expressly caution against) are the objects, say they, of our faith: they compare our faith to a hand that lays hold upon Christ, and applies his righteousness; and to an eye that looks upon him, and makes him present to us; and by looking on him (as on the brasen serpent) cures us. But this notion is so intricate, these phrases are so unintelligible, that I scarce believe the devisers of them did themselves know what they meant by them; I do not, I am sure: for what it is for one body to lean upon, or to be rolled on another; what for one body to reach at, and lay hold upon another; what it is to apply a garment to one's body, or a salve to one's wounds, I can easily understand: but what it is for a man's mind to lean upon a person, (otherwise than by assenting unto some proposition he speaks, or relying upon some promise he makes,) to apply a thing, otherwise than by consenting to some proposition concerning that thing, I cannot apprehend, or reach; there is not, as we noted before, any faculty or operation of a man's mind, which answers the intent of such notions or phrases. Let me put this case: Suppose a great province had generally revolted from its sovereign, whereby the people thereof had all deserved extreme punishment suitable to such an offence; but that the king, moved with pity, and upon the intercession of his only beloved son, (to-

gether with a satisfaction offered and performed by him,) should resolve to grant a general pardon to them, upon just, and fit, and withal very easy terms; and that, for the execution of this gracious purpose toward them, he should depute and send his son himself among them to treat with them, by him declaring his merciful intentions toward them, with the conditions, upon compliance wherewith, all, or any of them, should be pardoned their offence, and received into favour; those conditions being, suppose it, that first they should receive and acknowledge his son for such as he professed himself to be, (the king's son indeed, who truly brought such a message unto them from his majesty;) then that they should seriously resolve with themselves, and solemnly engage to return unto their due allegiance; undertaking faithfully for ever after to observe those laws, which the said prince in his father's name should propound unto them. Suppose further, that the prince in pursuance of this commission and design, being come into the country, should there send all about officers of his, enjoining them to discover the intent of his coming, what he offered, and upon what terms; withal, empowering them in his name to receive those, who complied, into favour, declaring them pardoned of all their offences, and restored to the benefit of the king's protection, and all the privileges of loyal subjects: suppose now, that these officers should go to the people, and speak to them in this manner: The king makes an overture of pardon and favour unto you, upon condition, that any one of you will recumb, rest, lean upon, or roll himself upon the person of his son, (rest upon his person, not only rely upon his word, that you are to

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understand,) or in case you will lay hold upon and apply to yourselves his son's righteousness, by which he hath procured of the king his father this mercy and favour for you, (not only being persuaded that he hath performed thus much for you, this is not enough;) do you think these messengers should thus well express themselves, or perform their message handsomely and with advantage? Should not they do much better, laying aside such words of metaphor and mystery, to speak in plain language; telling them, that their king's son (by plain characters discernible to be truly such) was come among them upon such an intention; that if they would acknowledge him, and undertake thereafter to obey him, they should receive a full pardon, with divers other great favours and advantages thereby? The case is apparently so like to that which stands between God and man, and doth so fully resemble the nature of the evangelical dispensation, that I need not make any application, or use any more argument to refute that notion: I shall only say, that I conceive these new phrases, for such they are, not known to ancient Christians, nor delivered, either in terms or sense, in scripture; for the places alleged in favour or proof of them by Ames, one of the first broachers of them, (all, we may presume, that they could find anywise seeming to favour their notion,) do not, as, if time would permit, might easily be shewed, import any such thing, but are strangely misapplied—that, I say, these phrases do much obscure the nature of this great duty, and make the state of things in the gospel more difficult and dark than it truly is; and thereby seem to be of bad consequence, being apt to beget in people both dangerous presumptions and

sad perplexities: for they hearing that they are only, SERM. IV.
or mainly bound to have such a recumbency upon Christ, or to make such an application of his righteousness, they begin (accordingly as they take themselves to be directed) to work their minds to it; and when they have hit upon that posture of fancy, which they guess to suit their teachers' meaning, then they become satisfied, and conceit they believe well, although perhaps they be ignorant of the principles of the Christian faith, and indisposed to obey the precepts of our Lord. Sometimes, on the other side, although they well understand, and are persuaded concerning the truth of all necessary Christian doctrines, and are well disposed to observe God's commandments, yet because they cannot tell whether they apprehend Christ's person dexterously, or apply to themselves his righteousness in the right manner, as is prescribed to them, (of which it is no wonder that they should doubt, since it is so hard to know what the doing so means,) they become disturbed and perplexed in their minds; questioning whether they do believe or no. Thus by these notions (or phrases rather) are some men tempted fondly to presume, and other good people are wofully discouraged by them; both being thence diverted, or withdrawn from their duty: whereas what it is to believe, as Christians anciently did understand it, and as we have assayed to explain it, is very easy to conceive; and the taking it so, can have no other than very good influence upon practice, as both reason (as we have insinuated) shews, and the scripture largely and plainly affirms. But let thus much suffice for the inquiry concerning the genuine nature and notion of faith proper to this

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place, (that faith by which in this text we are said to be justified:) the other particulars I cannot so much as touch upon at this time.

I end with those good prayers of our church:

5th Sunday after Easter. *O Lord, from whom all good things do come, grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good; and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Amen.

14th Sunday after Trinity. *Almighty and everlasting Lord, give unto us the increase of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Amen.

SERMON V.

OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

ROM. v. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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IN order to the understanding of these words, I did formerly propound divers particulars to be considered and discussed: the first was, What that faith is, by which Christians are said to be justified? This I have despatched: the next is, What justification doth import? The which I shall now endeavour to explain; and I am concerned to perform it with the more care and diligence, because the right notion of this term hath in latter times been canvassed with so much vehemence of dissension and strife.

In former times, among the fathers and the schoolmen, there doth not appear to have been any difference or debate about it; because, as it seems, men commonly having the same apprehensions about the matters, to which the word is applicable, did not so much examine or regard the strict propriety of expression concerning them: consenting in *things*, they did not fall to cavil and contend about the ex-

περὶ λέξεων διαμαχόμεθα. Naz.

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act meaning of *words*. They did indeed consider distinctly no such point of doctrine as that of *justification*, looking upon that word as used incidentally in some places of scripture, for expression of points more clearly expressed in other terms; wherefore they do not make much of the *word*, as some *divines* now do.

But in the beginning of the Reformation, when the discovery of some great errors (from the corruption and ignorance of former times) crept into vogue, rendered all things the subjects of contention, and multiplied controversies, there did arise hot disputes about this point; and the right stating thereof seemed a matter of great importance; nor scarce was any controversy prosecuted with greater zeal and earnestness: whereas yet (so far as I can discern) about the real points of doctrine, whereto this word, according to any sense pretended, may relate, there hardly doth appear any material difference; and all the questions depending, chiefly seem to consist about the manner of expressing things, which all agree in; or about the extent of the signification of words capable of larger or stricter acception: whence the debates about this point, among all sober and intelligent persons, might, as I conceive, easily be resolved or appeased, if men had a mind to agree, and did not love to wrangle; if at least a consent in believing the same things, although under some difference of expression, would content them, so as to forbear strife.

Articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiæ. *Luth.*

To make good which observation, tending as well to the illustration of the whole matter, as to the stating and decision of the controversies about it, let us consider the several divine acts, to which the

erm Justification is, according to any sense pre- SERM. ended, applicable: I say divine acts; for that the V. ustification we treat of is an act of God simple or ompound (in some manner) respecting, or termi- nated upon man, is evident, and will not, I suppose, be contested; the words of St. Paul in several places so clearly declaring it; as in that, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth;* and in that, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* Now according to the tenor of Christian doctrine such acts are these.

Rom. viii. 33. Rom. iv. 5. iii. 26.

1. God (in regard to the obedience performed to his will by his beloved Son, and to his intercession) is so reconciled to mankind, that unto every person, who doth sincerely believe the gospel, and, repenting of his former bad life, doth seriously resolve thereafter to live according to it, he doth (upon the solemn obsignation of that faith, and profession of that resolution in baptism) entirely remit all past offences, accepting his person, receiving him into favour; assuming him into the state of a loyal subject, a faithful servant, a dutiful son; and bestowing on him all the benefits and privileges suitable to such a state; according to those passages: *It behoved Christ to suffer——and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations: Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins;* and, *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins;* and, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world*

Luke xxiv. 46, 47. Acts ii. 38. iii. 19. v. 31. Acts x. 43. 2 Cor. v. 19.

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unto himself, not imputing their sins; and in other places innumerable.

Rom. iii. 24, 25.

2. As any person persisting in that sincere faith, and serious purpose of obedience, doth assuredly continue in that state of grace, and exemption from the guilt of sin; so in case that, out of human frailty, such a person doth fall into the commission of sin, God (in regard to the same performances and intercessions of his Son) doth, upon the confession and repentance of such a person, remit his sin, and retain him in or restore him to favour; according to those

1 John i. 9. sayings of St. John, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to*

1 John ii. 1. *cleanse us from all unrighteousness:* and, *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

3. To each person sincerely embracing the gospel, and continuing in steadfast adherence thereto, God doth afford his Holy Spirit, as a principle productive of all inward sanctity and virtuous dispositions in his heart, enabling also and quickening him to discharge the conditions of faith and obedience required from

Rom. viii. 14. Gal. iv. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 7. Acts ii. 38. Rom. viii. 9. Tit. iii. 5. (Eph. ii. 22.) Eph. ii. 10. iv. 23.

him, and undertaken by him; that which is by some termed making a person just, infusion into his soul of righteousness, of grace, of virtuous habits; in the scripture style it is called *acting by the Spirit, bestowing the gift of the Holy Ghost, renovation of the Holy Ghost, creation to good works, sanctification by the Spirit,* &c. which phrases denote partly the collation of a principle enabling to perform good works, partly the design of religion tending to that performance.

Now all these acts (as by the general consent of Christians, and according to the sense of the ancient

:holic church, so) by all considerable parties seem- SERM. V.
g to dissent, and so earnestly disputing about the
int of justification, are acknowledged and ascribed
ıto God; but with which of them the act of justi-
ation is solely or chiefly coincident; whether it
gnifieth barely some one of them, or extendeth to
ore of them, or comprehendeth them all, (accord-
g to the constant meaning of the word in scripture,)
e questions coming under debate, and so eagerly
osecuted: of which questions whatever the true
solution be, it cannot methinks be of so great con-
quence, as to cause any great anger or animosity
dissenters one toward another, seeing they all con-
ire in avowing the acts, whatever they be, meant
r the word *justification*, although in other terms;
eing all the dispute is about the precise and ade-
ıate notion of the word *justification:* whence
ıose questions might well be waved as unnecessary
ounds of contention; and it might suffice to under-
and the points of doctrine which it relateth to in
:her terms, laying that aside as ambiguous and liti-
ious. Yet because the understanding the rightest,
most probable notion of the word, may somewhat
nduce to the interpretation of the scriptures, and
clearing the matters couched in it, somewhat also
the satisfaction of persons considerate and peace-
ble, I shall employ some care faithfully (without
artiality to any side) to search it out, and declare
: in order whereto I shall propound some observa-
ons, seeming material.

I. Whereas it were not hard to speak much, and
riticise about the primitive sense of the word, and
bout its various acceptions both in holy scripture
nd other writings, I do question whether [redacted]

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would be pertinent or conducible to our purpose of understanding its right notion here: for knowing the primitive sense of words can seldom or never determine their meaning any where, they often in common use declining from it; and the knowing variety of acceptions doth at most yield only the advantage of choosing one suitable to the subjacent matter and occasion. We are not therefore to learn the sense of this word from mere grammarians.

Verba valent ut nummi.

II. The sense of this word is not to be searched in extraneous writers; both because no matter like to that we treat upon did ever come into their use or consideration, and because they do seldom or never use the word in a sense anywise congruous to this matter: in them most commonly the word δικαιόω doth signify (as the like word ἀξιόω) to deem a thing just, equal, or fit, (or simply to deem about a thing.) Sometimes also, yet not often as I take it, being applied to an action, or cause, it importeth to make it appear lawful, or just, as when we ordinarily say, to justify what one saith or doth, (whence δικαίωμα in Aristotle is an argument proving the justice of a cause, *firmamentum causæ*;) but in them very seldom or never it is applied to persons; and an example, I conceive, can hardly be produced, wherein it is so used.

Ἐδικαίωσαν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἔδοξαν. Bals. in Syn. Chalced. Can. 1.

III. In the sacred writings at large it is commonly applied to persons, and that according to various senses, some more wide and general, some more restrained and particular. It there sometime denoteth generally to exercise any judicial act upon, in regard unto, or in behalf of a person; to do him right, or justice, in declaring the merit of his cause, or pronouncing sentence about him; in acquitting or con-

demning him for any cause, in obliging him to, or exempting him from any burden, in dispensing to him any reward or punishment, indifferently: thus Absalom said, *O that I were made a judge in the land, that every man, which hath any suit or cause, might come unto me,* והצדקתיו *καὶ δικαιώσω αὐτὸν, and I would justify him,* that is, *I would do him right:* and in the eighty-second Psalm, this charge is given to the princes, or judges; *Defend the poor and fatherless,* הצדיקו *δικαιώσατε, justify the poor and needy;* that is, do right and justice to them. SERM. V. 2 Sam. xv. 4. Ps. lxxxii. 3.

But more particularly the word signifieth (and that according to the most usual and current acception) so to do a man right, as to pronounce sentence in his favour, as to acquit him from guilt, to excuse him from burden, to free him from punishment; whence we most often meet with the word placed in direct opposition to that of condemnation: as in that law, *If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked:* and in Solomon's prayer, *Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness:* and in the Proverbs, *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even both are an abomination unto the Lord:* and in the gospel our Saviour saith, *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* Deut. xxv. 1. 1 Kings viii. 32. 2 Chr. vi. 23. Prov. xvii. 15. Matt. xii. 37. (Is. v. 23. xliii. 9.)

In consequence upon this sense, and with a little deflection from it, to justify a person sometime denoteth to approve him, or esteem him just, a mental

SERM. V. judgment, as it were, being passed upon him: so *Wisdom* is said to be *justified*, that is, approved, *by her children*: so in the gospel some persons are said to *justify themselves*, that is, to conceit themselves righteous: and the *Publican went home justified rather than the Pharisee*, that is, more approved and accepted by God: so also it is said, that *all the people and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with John's baptism*: they justified God, that is, they declared their approbation of God's proceeding, in the mission of John.

Matt. xi. 19. Luke x. 29. xvi. 15. xviii. 14. Luke vii. 29.

In like manner, justification is taken for exemption from burdens; as where in the Acts St. Paul saith, *And from all things, from which by the law of Moses ye could not be justified, in this is every one that believeth justified.*

Acts xiii. 39.

It may also sometimes be taken for deliverance from punishment; as where in the law God saith, *The innocent and righteous slay thou not; for I will not justify the wicked*; that is, not let him escape with impunity; according to that in the Proverbs, *Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished.*

Exod. xxiii. 7.

IV. We may observe, that (as every man hath some phrases and particular forms of speech, in which he delighteth, so) this term is somewhat peculiar to St. Paul, and hardly by the other apostles applied to that matter, which he expresseth thereby; they usually in their sermons and epistles do speak the same thing, whatever it be, in other terms more immediately expressive of the matter. St. James indeed doth use it, but not so much, it seemeth, according to his usual manner of speech, as occasionally, to refute the false and pestilent conceits of

Acts xiii. 38. ii. 38. iii. 19. v. 31. x. 43. xxii. 16. Luke xxiv. 47.

some persons, who mistaking St. Paul's expressions and doctrine, did pervert them to the maintenance of Solifidian, Eunomian, and Antinomian positions, greatly prejudicial to good practice. And seeing the term is so proper to St. Paul in relation to this matter, the right sense and notion thereof seemeth best derivable from considering the nature of the subject he treateth on, observing the drift of his discourse and manner of his reasoning, comparing the other phrases he useth equivalent to this, and interpretative of his meaning. SERM. V.

V. Following this method of inquiry, I do observe and affirm, that the last notion of the word, as it is evidently most usual in the scripture, so it best suiteth to the meaning of St. Paul here, and otherwhere commonly, where he treateth upon the same matters; that God's justifying solely, or chiefly, doth import his acquitting us from guilt, condemnation, and punishment, by free pardon and remission of our sins, accounting us and dealing with us as just persons, upright and innocent in his sight and esteem: the truth of which notion I shall by divers arguments and considerations make good.

1. This sense doth best agree to the nature of the subject-matter, and to the design of St. Paul's discourse; which I take to be this; the asserting the necessity, reasonableness, sufficiency, and excellency of the Christian dispensation; in order to that, which is the end of all religion, the bringing men to happiness, and consequently to the rendering men acceptable to God Almighty, who is the sole Author and Donor of happiness: this is that, which in general he aimeth to assert and maintain.

This, I say, is that which he chiefly driveth at, to

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maintain, that it is not unreasonable that God should so proceed with men (whose good and felicity, as their gracious Maker, he greatly tendereth) as the Christian gospel declareth him to do, but that rather such proceeding was necessary and fit, in order to our salvation; and withal conformable to the ordinary method of God's proceedings toward the same purpose.

Now God's proceeding with man according to the gospel, the general tenor thereof doth set out to be this; that God out of his infinite goodness and mercy, in consideration of what his beloved Son, our blessed Lord, hath performed and suffered, in obedience to his will, and for the redemption of mankind, (which by transgression of his laws, and defailance in duty toward him, had grievously offended him and fallen from his favour, was involved in guilt, and stood obnoxious to punishment,) is become reconciled to them, (passing by and fully pardoning all offences by them committed against him,) so as generally to proffer mercy, upon certain reasonable and gentle terms, to all that shall sincerely embrace such overtures of mercy, and heartily resolve to comply with those terms required by him; namely, the returning and adhering to him, forsaking all impiety and iniquity, constantly persisting in faithful obedience to his holy commandments; this, I say, is the proceeding of God, which the Christian gospel doth especially hold forth, and which, according to our Lord's commission and command, the apostles did first preach to men; as whosoever will consider the drift and tenor of their preaching, will easily discern; which therefore St. Paul may reasonably be supposed here to assert and vindicate against the

Luke xxiv. 47.

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Jews, and other adversaries of the gospel: consequently the terms he useth should be so interpreted as to express that matter; whence being justified, will imply that which a person embracing the gospel doth immediately receive from God, in that way of grace and mercy, viz. an absolution from his former crimes, an acquittance from his debts, a state of innocence and guiltlessness in God's sight, an exemption from vengeance and punishment; all that which by him sometimes, and by the other apostles, is couched under the phrases of *remission of sins*, having sins *blotted out* and *washed away*, being *cleansed from sin*; and the like: thus considering the nature of the matter, and design of his discourse, would incline us to understand this word.

Acts xiii. 38. xxii. 16. ii. 38. iii. 19. v. 31. 1 John i. 7.

2. Again, the manner of his prosecuting his discourse, and the arguments by which he inferreth his conclusions concerning the gospel, do confirm this notion. He discourseth, and proveth at large, that all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, were *shut up under sin*, that *all had sinned, and did fall short of the glory of God*, that is, of rendering him his due glory by dutiful obedience,) that *every mouth was stopped*, having nothing to say in defence of their transgressions, and *that all the world stood obnoxious to* the severity of *God's judgments*; that not only the light of nature was insufficient to preserve men from offending inexcusably, even according to the verdict of their own consciences, but that the written law of God had (to manifold experience) proved ineffectual to that purpose, serving rather *to work wrath*, to bring men under a curse, to aggravate their guilt, to convince them of their sinfulness, to discourage and perplex them; upon

Rom. iii. 9. xi. 32. iii. 19, 23. Gal. iii. 22.

ὑπέχειν—ὑπόδικος.

Rom. viii. 3. Gal. iii. 21. Rom. iv. 15. iii. 20. vii. 7. Gal. ii. 16, 20. Rom. v. 20. vii. 8.

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which general state of men (so implicated in guilt, so liable to wrath) is consequent a necessity either of condemnation and punishment, or of mercy and pardon.

He doth also imply (that which in the Epistle to the Galatians, where he prosecuteth the same argument, is more expressly delivered) that no precedent dispensation had exhibited any manifest overture, or promise of pardon; for the light of nature doth only direct unto duty, condemning every man in his own judgment and conscience, who transgresseth it; but as to pardon in case of transgression, it is blind and silent; and the law of Moses rigorously exacteth punctual obedience, denouncing in express terms a condemnation and curse to the transgressors thereof in any part; from whence he collecteth, that *no man can be justified by the works of the law*, (*natural* or *Mosaical*; or that no precedent dispensation can justify any man,) and that *a man is justified by faith*, or hath absolute need of such a justification as that, which the gospel declareth and tendereth; λογιζόμεθα οὖν, *we hence*, saith he, *collect*, or argue, *that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law*: which justification must therefore import the receiving that free pardon, which the criminal and guilty world did stand in need of, which the forlorn and deplorable state of mankind did groan for, without which no man could have any comfort in his mind, any hope, or any capacity of salvation. If the state of man was a state of rebellion, and consequently of heinous guilt, of having forfeited God's favour, of obnoxiousness to God's wrath; then that justification, which was needful, was a dispensation of mercy, remitting that guilt, and removing those penalties.

Rom. i. 20. ii. 15. Gal. iii. 10, 12. Rom. iii. 20.

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Again, St. Paul commendeth the excellency of the evangelical dispensation from hence, that it entirely doth ascribe the justification of men to God's mercy and favour, excluding any merit of man, any right or title thereto, grounded upon what man hath performed; consequently advancing the glory of God, and depressing the vanity of man; *If*, saith he, *Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to boast; for that to him who worketh, wages are not reckoned as bestowed in favour, but are paid as debt:* so it would be, if men were justified by works; they might claim to themselves the due consequences thereof, impunity and reward; they would be apt to please themselves, and boast of the effects arising from their own performances: but if, as the gospel teacheth, *men are justified freely* (*gratis*) *by God's mercy and grace*, without any regard to what they formerly have done, either good or bad, those who have lived wickedly and impiously (upon their compliance with the terms proposed to them) being no less capable thereof, than the most righteous and pious persons; then *where is boasting? It is excluded;* then surely no man can assume any thing to himself, then all the glory and praise are due to God's frank goodness: the purport of which reasoning (so often used) doth imply, that a man's justification signifieth his being accepted or approved as just, standing *rectus in curia;* being in God's esteem, and, by his sentence, absolved from guilt and punishment; the which cannot otherwise be obtained, than from divine favour declared and exhibited in the gospel; according as St. Paul otherwhere fully speaketh: *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us*

Rom. iv. 2, 4. iii. 27. Tit. iii. 5. Eph. ii. 9. Rom. xi. 6.

Rom. iii. 24.

Rom. iv. 5. iii. 27. Eph. ii. 9.

Eph. i. 6, 7.

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accepted in the beloved; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

Again, St. Paul expresseth justification as an act of judgment performed by God, whereby he declareth his own righteousness, or justice; that justice consisting in acceptance of a competent satisfaction offered to him in amends for the debt due to him, and in reparation of the injury done unto him, in consequence thereof acquitting the debtor, and remitting the offence; so those words declare: *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* Justification there we see is expressed a result of Christ's redemption, and the act of God consequent thereon; so is remission of sins; God by them jointly demonstrating his justice and goodness, so that they may be well conceived the same thing diversely expressed, or having several names according to some diverse formalities of respect. So in other places, sometimes justification, sometimes remission of sins are reckoned the proper and immediate effects of our Saviour's passion; *Being* (saith St. Paul in the 5th to the Romans) *justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath;* and, *In whom* (saith he again in the first of the Epistle to the Ephesians) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins;* which argueth the equivalency of these terms.

Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26.

Rom. v. 9.

Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14.

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So likewise a main point of the evangelical covenant on God's part is made justifying of a man by his faith, or upon it; and remission of sins upon the same condition, is also made the like principal point, which sometime is put alone, as implying all the benefits of that covenant. Gal. iii. *per tot.* Rom. ix. 27.

Again, justification is by St. Paul made the immediate consequent, or special adjunct, of baptism; therein, he saith, we *die to sin*, (by resolution and engagement, to lead a new life in obedience to God's commandment,) and so dying we are said to be justified from sin, (that which otherwise is expressed, or expounded, by being freed from sin:) now the freedom from sin obtained in baptism is frequently declared to be the remission of sin then conferred, and solemnly confirmed by a visible seal. Rom. vi. 2. Rom. vi. 6, 7, 18, 22.

Whereas also so frequently we are said to be *justified by faith*, and according to the general tenor of scripture, the immediate consequent of faith is baptism; therefore dispensing the benefits consigned in baptism, is coincident with justification; and that dispensation is frequently signified to be the cleansing us from sin by entire remission thereof. Eph. v. 26. Tit. iii. 5. Acts xiii. 38. xxii. 16.

3. Further, the same notion may be confirmed by comparing this term with other terms and phrases equivalent, or opposite to this of justification.

One equivalent phrase is imputation of righteousness: *As*, saith St. Paul, *David speaketh of that man's blessedness, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin:* whence to him that considers the drift and force of St. Paul's discourse, it will clearly ap- Rom. iv. 6, 7, 8.

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pear, that justification, imputing righteousness, not imputing sin, and remission of sin, are the same thing; otherwise the apostle's discourse would not signify or conclude any thing.

For confirmation of his discourse (arguing free justification by God's mercy, not for our works) St. Paul also doth allege that place in the Psalm, *For in thy sight shall no man living be justified;* the sense of which place is evidently this, that no man living, his actions being strictly tried and weighed, shall appear guiltless, or deserve to be acquitted; but shall stand in need of mercy, or can no otherwise be justified than by a special act of grace.

Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16. Ps. cxliii. 2.

Again, imputing faith for righteousness is the same with justifying by faith, (*Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness:*) but that imputation is plainly nothing else but the approving him, and taking him for a righteous person in regard to his faith.

Rom. iv. 3, 22. Gal. iii. 6.

Again, justification is the same with being righteous before God, as appeareth by those words: *Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified:* but being just before God, plainly signifieth nothing else but being accepted by God, or approved to his esteem and judgment.

Rom. ii. 13.

Being reconciled to God seemeth also to be the same with being justified by him; as appeareth by those words, *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life:* where πολλῷ μᾶλλον δικαιωθέντες, and πολλῷ μᾶλλον

Rom. v. 9, 10.

καταλλαγέντες, seem to signify the same; but that reconciliation is interpreted by remission of sins: *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* SERM. V. 2 Cor. v. 19.

To obtain mercy is another term signifying justification; and what doth that import but having the remission of sins in mercy bestowed on us? Rom. xi. 3, 31, 32. 1 Pet. ii. 10.

Again, justification is opposed directly to condemnation: *As,* saith he, *by the offence of one man* (judgment came) *upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one man* (the free gift came) *upon all men to justification of life; (justification of life,* that is, a justification so relating to life, or bestowing a promise thereof, as the condemnation opposite thereto respected death, which it threatened.) In which place St. Paul comparing the first Adam with his actions, and their consequences, to the second Adam with his performances, and what resulted from them, teacheth us, that as the transgression of the *first* did involve mankind in guilt, and brought consequently upon men a general sentence of death, (forasmuch as all men did follow him in commission of sin;) so the obedience of the *second* did absolve all men from guilt, and restored them consequently into a state of immortality, (all men, under the condition prescribed, who, as it is said, should *receive the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness* tendered to them;) the justification therefore he speaketh of doth so import an absolution from guilt and punishment, as the condemnation signifieth a being declared guilty, and adjudged to punishment. Rom. v. 16, 18. Rom. v. 17.

Bellarmine indeed (who, in answering to this place objected against his doctrine, blunders ex- Bellarm. de Justif. ii. 3. i. 1.

SERM. V. tremely, and is put to his trumps of sophistry) telleth us, that in this place, to maintain the parallel or *antithesis* between Adam and Christ, justification must signify infusion of grace, or putting into a man's soul an inherent righteousness; because Adam's sin did constitute us unjust with an inherent unrighteousness: but (with his favour) justification and condemnation being both of them the acts of God, and it being plain, that God condemning doth not infuse any inherent unrighteousness into man, neither doth he justifying, formally (if the *antithesis* must be pat) put any inherent righteousness into him; inherent unrighteousness in the former case may be a consequent of that condemnation, and inherent righteousness may be connected with this justification; but neither *that* nor *this* may formally signify those qualities respectively: as the inherent unrighteousness consequent upon Adam's sin is not included in God's condemning, so neither is the inherent righteousness proceeding from our Saviour's obedience contained in God's justifying men.

But however most plainly (and beyond all evasions) justification and condemnation are opposed otherwhere in this Epistle: *Who*, saith St. Paul, *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* (or criminate against them.) *It is God who justifieth; who is he that condemneth?* What can be more clear, than that there justification signifieth absolution from all guilt and blame?

Rom. viii. 33, 34. Τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ—

4. Further, this notion may be confirmed by excluding that sense, which in opposition thereto is assigned, according to which justification is said to import, not only remission of sin, and acceptance with God, but the making a man intrinsecally righteous,

Bell. i. 3.

y infusing into him, as they speak, a habit of grace, SERM.
r charity; the putting into a man a *righteousness,* V.
y *which* (as the council of Trent expresseth it) *we* Justitiam in nobis recipientes.
re *renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not* *only reputed, but are called, and become truly righteous, receiving righteousness in ourselves.*

Now admitting this to be true, as in a sense it urely is, that whoever (according to St. Paul's neaning in this Epistle) is justified, is also really at he same time endued with some measure of that inrinsic righteousness which those men speak of, (forasmuch as that faith, which is required to justificaion, (being a gift of God, managed by his providence, nd wrought by his preventing grace,) doth include sincere and steadfast purpose of forsaking all imiety, of amendment of life, of obedience to God, which purpose *cleanseth the heart,* and is apt to pro- Rom. viii. 9. 1 Cor. iii. 16. Acts ii. 38. Eph. iv. 23, 24. 2 Cor. v. 17.
luce as well inward righteousness of heart, as outward righteousness of practice; for that also to every ound believer upon his faith is bestowed the Spirit f God, as a principle of righteousness, dwelling in im, directing, admonishing, exciting him to do well; assisting and enabling him sufficiently to the performance of those conditions, or those duties, which Christianity requireth, and the believer thereof undertaketh; which, the man's honest and diligent endeavour concurring, will surely beget the practice of all righteousness, and in continuance of such practice will render it habitual;)—avowing, I say, willingly, that such a righteousness doth ever accompany the justification St. Paul speaketh of, yet that sort of righteousness doth not seem implied by the word justification, according to St. Paul's intent, in those places, where he discourseth about justifica-

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tion by faith; for that such a sense of the word doth not well consist with the drift and efficacy of his reasoning, nor with divers passages in his discourse. For,

1. Whereas St. Paul, from the general depravation of manners in all men, both Jews and Gentiles, argueth the necessity of such a justification, as the Christian gospel declareth and exhibiteth, if we should take justification for infusing an inherent quality of righteousness into men, by the like discourse we might infer the imperfection and insufficiency of Christianity itself, and consequently the necessity of another dispensation beside it; for that even all Christians, as St. James saith, do offend often, and commission of sin doth also much reign among them; so that St. Paul's discourse (justification being taken in this sense) might strongly be retorted against himself.

James iii. 2.

2. Supposing that sense of justification, a Jew might easily invalidate St. Paul's ratiocination, by saying, that even their religion did plainly enough declare such a justification, which God did bestow upon all good men in their way, as by their frequent acknowledgments and devotions is apparent; such as those of the Psalmist: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, renew a right spirit within me. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; incline my heart unto thy testimonies.* Which sort of prayers God hearing did infuse righteousness, and justified those persons in this sense; so that Christianity herein could not challenge any thing peculiar, or could upon this score appear so necessary as St. Paul pretendeth.

Ps. li. 10.

Ps. cxliii. 10.

cxix. 35, 36.

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3. From the justification St. Paul speaketh of, all respect to any works, and to any qualifications in men, (such as might beget in them any confidence in themselves, or yield occasion of boasting,) is excluded; it cannot therefore well be understood for a constituting man intrinsecally righteous, or infusing worthy qualities into him; but rather for an act of God terminated upon a man as altogether unworthy of God s love, as an enemy, as a pure object of mercy; so it is most natural to understand those expressions, importing the same thing; *God justifieth the ungodly; we being sinners, Christ died for us;* (purchasing, as the following words imply, justification for us;) *being yet enemies, we by his death were reconciled,* or justified, for reconciliation and justification, as we before noted, do there signify the same.

Rom. iv. 5. v. 8.

Rom. v. 10.

4. Abraham is brought in as an instance of a person justified in the same manner, as Christians are according to the gospel: but his justification was merely the approving and esteeming him righteous, in regard (not to any other good works, but) to his steadfast faith, and strong persuasion concerning the power and faithfulness of God—because *he was fully persuaded, that what God had promised he was able to perform;* to which faith and justification consequent thereon, St. Paul comparing those of Christians, subjoineth; *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.* As then it were an idle thing to fancy a righteousness, upon the score of that belief, dropt into Abraham; and as his being justified is expressly

Rom. iv. 21.

Rom. iv. 23, 24.

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called, having righteousness, upon the account of his faith, imputed, or ascribed, to him; so our justification (like and answerable to his) should correspondently be understood, the approving and accounting us, notwithstanding our former transgressions, as righteous persons, in regard to that honest and steadfast faith, wherein we resemble *that father of the faithful.*

Even St. James himself, when he saith that Abraham and Rahab were justified by works, it is evident that he meaneth not that they had certain righteous qualities infused into them, or were made thence by God intrinsecally more righteous than they were before, but that they were approved and accepted by God, because of the good works they performed, (in faith and obedience to God,) one of them offering to sacrifice his son, the other preserving the spies sent from God's people.

5. The so often using the word imputation of righteousness, instead of justification, doth imply this act not to be a transient operation upon the soul of man, but an act immanent to God's mind, respecting man only as its object, and translating him into another relative state: with this sense that word excellently well agreeth, otherwise it were obscure, and so apt to perplex the matter, that probably St. Paul would not have used it.

6. Again, when it is said again and again, *that faith is imputed for righteousness*, it is plain enough, that no other thing in man was required thereto; to say, that he is thereby sanctified, or hath gracious habits infused, is uncouth and arbitrarious: the obvious meaning is, that therefore he is graciously accepted and approved, as we said before.

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7. We might in fine add, that the word justification is very seldom or never used in that sense of making persons righteous, or infusing righteousness into them. Bellarmine and Grotius, having searched with all possible diligence, do allege three or four places, wherein (with some plausible appearance) they pretend it must be so understood: but as they are so few, so are they not any of them thoroughly clear and certain: but are capable to be otherwise interpreted without much straining; the clearest place, Dan. xii. 3. the LXX. read מצרקים, ἀπὸ δικαίων, which the Hebrew and sense will bear. Wherefore the other sense, which we have maintained, being undeniably common and current in the scripture, and having so many particular reasons shewing it agreeable to St. Paul's intent, seemeth rather to be embraced.

In St. Paul's Epistles I can only find three or four places, wherein the word *justifying* may with any fair probability be so extended as to signify an internal operation of God upon the soul of men; they are these:

And such were some of you; but ye have been washed, but ye have been sanctified, but ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus, and * *by the Spirit of our God;* where justification being performed by the Spirit of God, seemeth to imply a spiritual operation upon a man's soul, as an ingredient thereof. 1 Cor. vi. 11. * iv.

According to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he poured on us richly by Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we may be made heirs according to the hope of everlast- Tit. iii. 5, 6, 7.

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ing life: where God's justifying us by the grace of Christ seemeth to include the renewing by the Holy Ghost.

Rom. vi. 7. *He that dieth is justified from sin:* where St. Paul speaking about our obligation to lead a new life in holy obedience, upon account of our being dedicated to Christ, and renouncing sin in baptism, may be interpreted to mean a being really in our hearts purified and freed from sin.

Rom. viii. 30. *Whom he predestinated, those he called; and whom he called, those he justified; and whom he justified, those he glorified:* where the chief acts of God toward those who finally shall be saved, being in order purposely recited, and justification being immediately (without interposing sanctification) coupled to glorification, the word may seem to comprise sanctification.

If considering these places (which yet are not clearly prejudicial to the notion we have made good, but may well be interpreted so as to agree thereto) it shall seem to any, that St. Paul doth not ever so strictly adhere to that notion, as not sometime to extend the word to a larger sense, I shall not much contend about it: it is an ordinary thing for all writers to use their words sometimes in a larger, sometimes in a stricter sense; and it sufficeth to have shewn, that where St. Paul purposely treateth about the matter we discourse upon, the purport of his discourse argueth, that he useth it according to that notion which we have proposed.

8. I shall only add one small observation, or conjecture, favouring this notion; which is the probable occasion of all St. Paul's discourse and disputation about this point, which seemeth to have been this:

That Christianity should (upon so slender a condition or performance as that of faith) tender unto all persons indifferently, however culpable or flagitious their former lives had been, a plenary remission of sins and reception into God's favour, did seem an unreasonable and implausible thing to many: the Jews could not well conceive, or relish, that any man so easily should be translated into a state equal or superior to that which they took themselves peculiarly to enjoy: the Gentiles themselves (especially such as conceited well of their own wisdom and virtue) could hardly digest it: Celsus in Origen could not imagine or admit, that bare faith should work such a miracle, as presently to turn a dissolute person into a saint, beloved of God, and designed to happiness. SERM. V. Vid. Cyrill. adv. Julian. lib. vii. p. 248. where justification is very well described. ψιλὴ πίστις.

Zozimus saith of Constantine, that he chose Christianity as the only religion that promised impunity and pardon for his enormous practices; intimating his dislike of that point in our religion. This prejudice against the gospel St. Paul removeth, by shewing that, because of all men's guilt and sinfulness, such an exhibition of mercy, such an overture of acceptance, such a remission of sin was necessary in order to salvation, so that without it no man could be exempted from wrath and misery; and that consequently all other religions (as not exhibiting such a remission) were to be deemed in a main point defective: when therefore he useth the word justification to express this matter, it is reasonable to suppose, that he intendeth thereby to signify that remission, or dispensation of mercy.

It may be objected, that St. Austin and some others of the Fathers do use the word commonly

SERM. V. according to the sense of the Tridentine council. I answer, that the point having never been discussed, and they never having thoroughly considered the sense of St. Paul, might unawares take the word as it sounded in Latin, especially the sense they affixed to it, signifying a matter very true and certain in Christianity. The like hath happened to other Fathers in other cases; and might happen to them in this, not to speak accurately in points that never had been sifted by disputation. More, I think, we need not say in answer to their authority.

VI. So much may suffice for a general explication of the notion; but for a more full clearing of the point, it may be requisite to resolve a question concerning the time when this act is performed or dispensed. It may be inquired, when God justifieth, whether once, or at several times, or continually. To which question I answer briefly:

1. That the justification which St. Paul discourseth of, seemeth in his meaning, only or especially to be that act of grace, which is dispensed to persons at their baptism, or at their entrance into the church; when they openly professing their faith, and undertaking the practice of Christian duty, God most solemnly and formally doth absolve them from all guilt, and accepteth them into a state of favour with him: that St. Paul only or chiefly respecteth this act, considering his design, I am inclined to think, and many passages in his discourse seem to imply.

If his design were (as I conceive it probable) to vindicate the proceeding of God, peculiarly declared in the gospel, in receiving the most notorious and heinous transgressors to grace in baptism, then especially must the justification he speaketh of relate to

that; to confirm which supposition, we may consider, that, SERM. V.

1. In several places justification is coupled with baptismal regeneration and absolution: *Such were some of you; but ye have been washed, ye have been sanctified, ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus:* (where, by the way, *being sanctified* and *being justified* seem equivalent terms; as in that place where Christ is said to *have given himself for the church, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word,* sanctification, I conceive, importeth the same thing with justification.) Again, *He saved us by the laver of regeneration, that having been justified by his grace, we may be made heirs of everlasting life.* 1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. v. 25, 26. Heb. x. 29. Tit. iii. 5, 7. Heb. x. 22, 23.

2. St. Paul in expressing this act, as it respecteth the faithful, commonly doth use a tense referring to the past time: he saith not δικαιούμενοι, *being justified,* but δικαιωθέντες, *having been justified;* not δικαιοῦσθε, *ye are justified,* but δικαιώθητε, *ye have been justified;* namely, at some remarkable time, that is, at their entrance into Christianity. (Our translators do render it according to the present time; but it should be rendered as I say, in our text, and in other places.) Rom. v. 1, 9. Tit. iii. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

3. St. Paul in the 6th to the Romans discourseth thus: Seeing we in baptism are cleansed and disentangled from sin, are *dead to it, and so justified from it,* God forbid that we should return to live in the practice thereof, so abusing and evacuating the grace we have received; which discourse seemeth plainly to signify, that he treateth about the justification conferred in baptism. Rom. vi.

4. He expresseth the justification he speaketh of Rom. iii. 25.

SERM. V. by the words πάρεσις τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων, *the passing over foregoing sins,* which seemeth to respect that universal absolution, which is exhibited in baptism. *Being,* saith he, *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.*

5. The relation this justification hath to faith, being dispensed in regard thereto, (or upon condition thereof,) doth infer the same: Faith is nothing else but a hearty embracing Christianity, which first exerteth itself by open declaration and avowal in bap-
Rom. x. 10. tism, (when we *believe with our hearts to righteousness, and confess with our mouth to salvation;*) to that time therefore the act of justification may be supposed especially to appertain: then, when the evangelical covenant is solemnly ratified, the grace thereof especially is conferred. Upon such considerations I conceive that St. Paul's justification chiefly doth respect that act of grace, which God consigneth to us at our baptism. But further,

2. The virtue and effect of that first justifying act doth continue (we abide in a justified state) so long as we do perform the conditions imposed by God,
Heb. x. 23. and undertaken by us at our first justification; *holding fast the profession of our hope without wavering; keeping faith, and a good conscience;* so long as we do not forfeit the benefit of that grace by
1 Tim. i. 19. *making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience,*
2 Pet. ii. 20, &c. relapsing into infidelity, or profaneness of life. Our
Heb. x. 26, 38. vi. 1. case is plainly like to that of a subject, who having rebelled against his prince, and thence incurred his

displeasure, but having afterward upon his submission, by the clemency of his prince, obtained an act of pardon, restoring him to favour and enjoyment of the protection and privileges suitable to a loyal subject, doth continue in this state, until by forsaking his allegiance, and running again into rebellion, he so loseth the benefit of that pardon, that his offence is aggravated thereby: so if we do persevere firm in faith and obedience, we shall (according to the purport of the evangelical covenant) continue in a state of grace and favour with God, and in effect remain justified; otherwise the virtue of our justification ceaseth, and we in regard thereto are more deeply involved in guilt. SERM. V.

3. Although justification chiefly signifieth the first act of grace toward a Christian at his baptism, yet (according to analogy of reason, and affinity in the nature of things) every dispensation of pardon granted upon repentance may be styled justification; for as particular acts of repentance, upon the commission of any particular sins, do not so much differ in nature, as in measure or degree, from that general conversion practised in embracing the gospel; so the grace vouchsafed upon these penitential acts is only in largeness of extent, and solemnity of administration, diversified from that; especially considering that repentance after baptism is but a reviving of that first great resolution and engagement we made in baptism; that remission of sin upon it is only the renovation of the grace then exhibited; that the whole transaction in this case is but a reinstating the covenant then made (and afterward by transgression infringed) upon the same terms, which were then agreed upon; that consequently, by congruous

Pœnitentia imitatur baptismatis gratiam. *Hier. adv. Pelag.* i. 10.

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analogy, this remission of sins, and restoring to favour, granted to a penitent, are only the former justification reinforced; whence they may bear its name: but whether St. Paul ever meaneth the word to signify thus, I cannot affirm.

Now according to each of these notions all good Christians may be said to have been justified; they have been justified by a general abolition of their sins, and reception into God's favour in baptism; they so far have enjoyed the virtue of that gracious dispensation, and continued in a justified state, as they have persisted in faith and obedience; they have, upon falling into sin, and rising thence by repentance, been justified by particular remissions. So that *having been justified by faith, they have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I Believe in God,

SERMON VI.

THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM THE FRAME OF THE WORLD.

JER. li. 15.

He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding. Jer. x. 12.

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THE attentive observation of this world, or visible frame, is not only in itself a most worthy employment of our thoughts, (much more noble than any of those petty cares which commonly possess or distract our minds,) but, if either the example of the best men, or the great usefulness thereof, to the best purposes, can oblige us, even a considerable duty not to be neglected by us. For it is that which affords most cogent and satisfactory arguments to convince us of, and to confirm us in, the belief of that truth which is the foundation of all religion and piety, the being of one God, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfections, the maker and upholder of all things; it instructs us not only that God is, but more distinctly shews what he is; declaring his chief and peculiar attributes of wisdom, goodness, and power superlative; it also serves to beget in our minds affections toward God, suitable to those notions; a reverent

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adoration of his unsearchable wisdom; an awful dread of his powerful majesty; a grateful love of his gracious benignity and goodness: to these uses we find it applied by the best men, not only by the wisest philosophers among heathens, but by the holy prophets of God; who frequently harp upon this string, and make sweetest melody thereon; exciting both in themselves and others, pious thoughts and holy devotions therewith; strengthening their faith in God; advancing their reverence toward him; quickening and inflaming their love of him; magnifying his glory and praise thereby; by the consideration, I say, of those wonderful effects discernible in nature, or appearing to us in this visible world. And if ever to imitate them herein were necessary, it seems to be so now, when a pretence to natural knowledge, and acquaintance with these things, hath been so much abused to the promoting of atheism and irreligion; when that instrument which was chiefly designed, and is of itself most apt, to bring all reasonable creatures to the knowledge, and to the veneration of their Maker, hath (in a method most preposterous and unnatural) been perverted to contrary ends and effects. To the preventing and removing which abuse, as every man should contribute what he can, so let me be allowed to endeavour somewhat toward it, by representing briefly what my meditation did suggest, serving to declare, that (as the prophet asserts, or implies in the words I read) even in this visible world, there are manifest tokens, or footsteps, by which we may discover it to be the work, or product, of one Being, incomprehensibly wise, powerful, and good; to whom, consequently, we must owe the highest respect and love,

Psal. viii. 3. xix. 1. xxxiii. 5. lxxxix. 11. cxlviii. 5. civ. 5. cxv. 16. cxix. 64. cxlv. 10. cxlvii. 4.

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all possible worship and service. Of these footsteps, or signs, there be innumerably many, which, singly taken, do discover such perfections to be concerned in the production of them; the relation of several to each other do more strongly and plainly confirm the same; the connection and correspondence of all together doth still add force and evidence thereto, each attesting to the existence of those perfections, all conspiring to declare them concentred and united in one cause and being.

I. View we first, singly, those things which are most familiar and obvious to our senses, (for only some such I mean to consider, such as any man awake, and in his senses, without any study or skill more than ordinary, without being a deep philosopher or a curious virtuoso, may with an easy attention observe and discern;) view we such objects, I say; for instance, first, those plants we every day do see, smell, and taste; Have not that number, that figure, that order, that temperament, that whole contexture and contemperation of parts we discern in them, a manifest relation to those operations they perform? Were not such organs so fashioned, and so situated, and so tempered, and in all respects so fitted, some of them in order to the successive propagation of them, (that they might in kind never fail or perish, but in that respect become as it were immortal;) some in regard to their present nutrition and maintenance, (that the individuals themselves might not, before their due period of subsistence run through, be spent, or destroyed;) some for shelter and defence against all sort of causes prejudicial to either of those con-

Ἵνα τοῦ ἀεὶ, καὶ τοῦ θείου μετέχωσιν ᾗ δύνανται. Arist. de An. ii. 4.

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tinuances in being respectively; to omit those, which serve for grace and ornament? (Do not, I say, the seed most evidently respect the propagation of the kind; the root the drawing of nourishment, the nervous filaments the conveyance of that; the skin or bark, the keeping all together close and safe; the husks and shells, preservation of the seed; the leaves, defence of the fruit?) That such a constitution of parts is admirably fit for such purposes, we cannot be so stupid as not to perceive; we cannot but observe it necessary, for that by detraction, or altering any of them, we obstruct those effects. Whence then, I inquire, could that fitness proceed? from chance, or casual motions of matter? But is it not repugnant to the name and nature of chance, that any thing regular or constant should arise from it? that by it causes vastly many in number and different in quality, (such as are the ingredients into the frame of the least organ in a plant,) should not once, not sometimes, not often only, but always, in one continual unaltered method concur to the same end and effect, (to the same useful end, to the same handsome effect?) Are not confusion, disparity, deformity, unaccountable change and variety, the proper issues of chance[a]? It is Aristotle's discourse: *That one or two things*, saith he, *should happen to be in the same manner, is not unreasonable to suppose; but that all things should conspire by chance, it looks like a fiction to conceive: what is universal*

[a] —Fortuna amica varietati constantiam respuit. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* 2.

Ὁ λίαν ὑπερβάλλων ἀριθμὸς οὐ δύναται μετέχειν τάξεως· θείας γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο δυνάμεως ἔργον, ἥτις καὶ τόδε συνέχει τὸ πᾶν. Arist. Pol. vii. 4.

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and perpetual cannot result from chance. We can only, saith he again, ***with good reason assert, or suppose such causes of things, as we see generally or frequently to occur*** [b]. Now did we ever observe (or ever any man through the whole course of times) any new thing like or comparable to any of these, to spring up casually? Do we not with admiration regard (as a thing very rare and unaccountable) in other pieces of matter any gross resemblance to these, that seemeth to arise from contingent motions and occurrences of bodies? If chance hath formerly produced such things, how comes it, that it doth not sometime now produce the like; whence becomes it for so many ages altogether impotent and idle? Is it not the same kind of cause? hath it not the same instruments to work with, and the same materials to work upon? The truth is, as it doth not now, so it did not, it could not ever produce such effects; such effects are plainly improper and incongruous to such a cause: chance never writ a legible book; chance never built a fair house; chance never drew a neat picture; it never did any of these things, nor ever will; nor can be without absurdity supposed able to do them; which yet are works very gross and rude, very easy and feasible, as it were, in comparison to the production of a flower or a tree. It is not therefore reasonable to ascribe those things to chance: to what then? will you say, to necessity; If you do, you do only alter

[b] Τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἓν ἢ δύο τοῦτον τρόπον ἔχειν, οὐδὲν ἄτοπον· τὸ δὲ πάνθ' ὁμοίως πλάσματι ἔοικεν, ἅμα δὲ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς φύσει τὸ ὡς ἔτυχεν. οὐδὲ τὸ πανταχοῦ, καὶ πᾶσιν ὑπάρχον τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς τύχης. De Cœlo, ii. 8.

Μόνα γὰρ ταῦτα θετέον εὐλόγως, ὅσα ἐπὶ πολλῶν, ἢ πάντων ὁρῶμεν ὑπάρχοντα. Id. de Cœlo.

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the phrase; for necessary causality (as applicable to this case, and taken without relation to some wisdom or counsel that established it) is but another name for chance; they both are but several terms denoting blindness and unadvisedness in action; both must imply a fortuitous determination of causes, acting without design or rule. A fortuitous determination, I say; for motions of matter, not guided by art or counsel, must be in their rise fortuitous, (insomuch as that according to the nature of the thing there is no repugnance, and we may easily conceive it possible, that the matter might have been moved otherwise; there being therein no principle originally determining it to this more than to that sort of motion;) and the same motions in their process must be determinate, because in their subject there is no principle, whereby it can alter its course. The same effect therefore of this kind, if necessary, is casual as to its original, and in that respect may be said to come from chance; if casual, is necessary in the progress, and may thence be said to proceed from necessity. And although we should suppose the beginning of these causes in their action, or motion, to be eternal, it were all one; for whether now, or yesterday, or from eternity, infers no difference (except the entangling our minds, and encumbering the case with impertinent circumstances) as to our purpose; not the circumstance of the time, but the quality of the cause being only here considerable; the same causes (abstracting from all counsel ordering them) being alike apt or inept yesterday as to-day, always as sometimes, from all eternity as at any set time, to produce such effects. Neither can we therefore reasonably attribute the

effects we speak of to necessity; except only to such an hypothetical necessity, as implies a determination from causes acting by will and understanding; of such a necessity matter is very susceptive; being perfectly obedient to art directing it with competent force; as on the other hand we find it by reason and experience altogether unapt, without such direction, of itself (that is, either necessarily or contingently) to come into any regular form, or to pursue any constant course; it being, as we see, shattered into particles innumerable, different in size, shape, and motion, according to all variety more than imaginable; thence only fit in their proceedings to cross and confound each other: the determination therefore of such causes as these to such ends and effects, can be only the result of wisdom, art, and counsel; which alone (accompanied with sufficient power) can digest things, void of understanding, into handsome order, can direct them unto fit uses, can preserve them in a constant tenor of action; these effects must therefore, I say, proceed from wisdom, and that no mean one, but such as greatly surpasses our comprehension, joined with a power equally great: for to digest bodies so very many, so very fine and subtile, so diverse in motion and tendency, that they shall never hinder or disturb one another, but always conspire to the same design, is a performance exceedingly beyond our capacity to reach how it could be contrived or accomplished; all the endeavours of our deepest skill and most laborious industry cannot arrive to the producing of any work not extremely inferior to any of these, not in comparison very simple and base; neither can our wits serve to devise, nor our sense

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to direct, nor our hand to execute any work, in any degree like to those. So that it was but faintly, though truly, said of him in Cicero, concerning things of this kind; *Nature's powerful sagacity no skill, no hand, no artist can follow by imitation.*

Naturæ solertiam nulla ars, nulla manus, nemo opifex consequi possit imitando. *Cic. de N. D.* ii. 32.

And if we have reason to acknowledge so much wisdom and power discovered in one plant, and the same consequently multiplied in so many thousands of diverse kinds; how much more may we discern them in any one animal, in all of them! the parts of whom in unconceivable variety, in delicate minuteness, in exquisiteness of shape, position, and temper, do indeed so far exceed the other, as they appear designed to functions far more various and more noble; the enumeration of a few whereof, obvious to our sense, in some one living creature, together with conjectures about their manner of operation and their use, how much industry of man hath it employed; how many volumes hath it filled, and how many more may it do, without detecting a ten thousandth part of what is there most obvious and easy; without piercing near the depth of that wisdom which formed so curious a piece! So much however is palpably manifest, that each of these so many organs was designed, and fitted on purpose to that chief use, or operation, we see it to perform; this, of them to continue the kind; that, to preserve the *individuum;* this, to discern what is necessary, convenient, or pleasant to the creature, or what is dangerous, offensive, or destructive thereto; that, to pursue or embrace, to decline or shun it; this, to enjoy what is procured of good; that, to remove what is hurtful or useless, or to guard from mischief and injury; that each one is furnished with such

apt instruments, suitable to its particular needs, appetites, capacities, stations, is most apparent; and I must therefore here ask again, (and that with more advantage,) whence this could proceed; whence all these parts came to be fashioned and suited; all of them so necessary, or so convenient, that none without the imperfection and the prejudice of the creature, some not without its destruction, can be wanting? who shaped and tempered those hidden subtile springs of life, sense, imagination, memory, passion; who impressed on them a motion so regular and so durable, which through so many years, among so many adverse contingencies assailing it, is yet so steadily maintained? Can this however proceed from giddy chance, or blind necessity? could ever (of old or lately, it is all one) senseless matter jumble itself so fortunately, into so wonderful postures, so that of those innumerable myriads of atoms, or small insensible bodies, (which compose each of these curious engines,) none should in its roving miss the way; none fail to stop and seat itself in that due place, where exactest art would have disposed it[c]? Could so many, so dim, so narrow marks be hit without the aim of a most piercing and unerring eye; without the guidance of a most steady and immoveable hand? All that grace and beauty, which so delights our sense beholding it; all that correspondence and symmetry, which so satisfies our mind considering it; all that virtue and energy, extending to performances so great and admirable, must they be

[c] Ἐπελθε τῶν μελῶν ἁπάντων τὴν διάπλασιν, τὸ σχῆμα, τὰς ἐνεργείας, τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα συμφωνίαν· καὶ πάσης πόλεως εὐνομουμένης καὶ φιλοσόφους ἅπαντας τοὺς πολίτας ἐχούσης ἀκριβεστέραν ὄψει τὴν μελῶν τούτων πρὸς ἄλληλα πολιτείαν. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 69.

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ascribed to causes of no worth, and supposed done to no purpose? that eye which reaches the very stars, and in a moment renders all the world, as it were, present to the creature that useth it; that ear which perceives the least stirring of the air about it, and so subtly distinguishes the smallest differences in its motion; that tongue which so readily is composed to imitate so many petty diversities of tune; those other organs, which are affected by the least breath or vapour, by the least tang or savour, so that it by them can both perceive the presence, and distinguish the quality of whatever is near, that it may not be disappointed in missing what is beneficial, nor be surprised by the assault of what is noxious thereto; all these and many more, the defect, distemper, or dislocation of which would be disgraceful, incommodious, or destructive to the creature; all these, I say, can any man, endued with common sense, or ordinary ingenuity, affirm to have proceeded from any other cause, than from a wisdom and power incomprehensible[d]? May not the most excellent pieces of human artifice, the fairest structures, the finest portraitures, the most ingenious and useful inquiries, such as we are wont most to admire and commend, with infinitely more ease, happen to exist without any contrivance or industry spent upon them? If we cannot allow those rude imitations of nature to spring up of themselves, but as soon as we espy them are ready to acknowledge them products of excellent art, though we know not the artist, nor did see him work; how much more reason is there that we

Vid. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ια'.

[d] Μή τι ἀχρηστότερον τριχῶν τοῦ ἐπιγενείου; τί οὖν οὐ συνεχρήσατο καὶ ταύταις ὡς μάλιστα πρεπόντως ἐδύνατο; οὐ διέκρινε δι' αὐτῶν τὸ ἄρρεν καὶ τὸ θῆλυ, &c. Epict. i. 16.

should believe those works of nature, so incomparably more accurate, to proceed also from art, although invisible to us, and performing its workmanship by a secret hand? I can assure you of those, who have with greatest attention contemplated these things, and who pass for men most able to judge in the case, (even those who have discovered least affection to religion, or indeed are more than suspected of an aversion from it; whose words therefore may be taken at least for impartial dictates of common sense,) that even from such the irresistible force and evidence of the thing hath extorted clear and ample confessions to this purpose[c]: that in nature nothing is performed without reason or design; but every thing in the best manner and to the best end, beyond what is done in any art, is frequently asserted and assumed by Aristotle himself, as a most evident truth: that in contriving the frame of our bodies, (and the same holdeth concerning the bodies of other animals,) a wisdom inscrutable; in accomplishing it, a power insuperable; in designing to them so much of decency and convenience, a benignity worthy of all veneration are demonstrated, Galen in several places, with language very full and express, yea very earnest and pathetical, doth acknowledge[f]. That who doth attently regard a locust, or a caterpillar, or any other viler animal, shall every where therein SERM. VI.

[c] Arist. de Part. An. i. 1. Μᾶλλον δ' ἐστὶ τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα, καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἐν τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις, ἢ ἐν τοῖς τῆς τέχνης.

Ἡ φύσις ἀεὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον. Phys. ii. 8.

Ἡ φύσις οὐδὲν ἀλόγως οὐδὲ μάτην ποιεῖ. De Cœlo, ii. 11.

Ἕνεκα τοῦ ἅπαντα ὑπάρχει τὰ φύσει. De Anima, iii. 12.

[f] Gal. de Placitis Hippoc. et Plat. lib. 7. de Usu Part. 3. Οἷος μὲν ἐστὶ τὴν σοφίαν, οἷος δὲ τὴν δύναμιν, ὁποῖος δὲ τὴν χρηστότητα, &c.

SERM. VI. discover a wonderful art and diligence, is an aphorism dropt even from the gloomy pen of Cardan [g]. That *if any man shall view thoroughly all the instruments both of generation and nutrition, and doth not perceive them to have been made and ordered to their respective offices by some mind,* (or intelligent agent,) *he is to be reputed himself void of mind* [h], (or out of his wits,) is the expression of another person well known among us, whom few do judge partial to this side, or suspicious of bearing a favourable prejudice to religion. Thus doth common sense from these sort of beings, whereof there be innumerable exposed daily to our observation, even singly considered, deduce the existence of a wisdom, power, and goodness unconceivably great; and there are probably divers others (stones, metals, minerals, &c.) no less obvious, even here upon the earth, our place of dwelling, which, were our senses able to discern their constitution and texture, would afford matter of the same acknowledgment [i].

II. But if, passing from such particulars, we observe the relation of several kinds of things each to other, we shall find more reason to be convinced concerning the same excellent perfections further extending themselves. By such comparison we may easily discern, that what speaks much of art in it-

[g] *Card. de Variet.* vii. 27. pag. 283.

[h] Itaque ad sensus procedo, satis habens si hujusmodi res attigero tantum, plenius autem tractandas aliis reliquero, qui si machinas omnes tum generationis, tum nutritionis satis perspexerint, nec tamen eas a mente aliqua conditas, ordinatasque ad sua quasque officia viderint, ipsi profecto sine mente esse censendi sunt. *Hobbes. de Hom.* cap. 1.

[i] Νὴ τὸν Δία καὶ τοὺς Θεοὺς ἓν τῶν γεγονότων ἀπήρκει πρὸς τὸ αἰθέσθαι τῆς προνοίας τῆγε αἰδήμονι, καὶ εὐχαρίστῳ. Epict. i. 16.

self singly considered, declares more thereof in respect to other things; and that many things, in which, separately looked upon, we could perceive but small artifice, have indeed much of it in such relation, (which although seeming in themselves mean and despicable, are yet very useful and necessary to considerable purposes, in subserviency to the convenience of more noble beings;) and though perhaps we cannot thoroughly penetrate the relative use and design of every thing, which hangs up before us in nature's shop, (by reason of our incapacity, or unskilfulness in her trade,) yet we shall have reason, from what we can plainly discover, to collect, that each piece there is a tool accommodate to some use. Is there not, for instance, a palpable relation between the frame, the temper, the natural inclinations, or instincts, of each animal, and its element, or natural place and abode; wherein it can only live, finding therein its food, its harbour, its refuge? [1]Is not to each faculty within (or to each sensitive organ) an object without prepared, exactly correspondent thereto; which were it wanting, the faculty would become vain and useless, yea sometime harmful and destructive; as reciprocally the object would import little or nothing, if such a faculty were not provided and suited thereto? As for example, what would an eye (or the visive power) signify, if there were not light prepared to render things visible thereto? and how much less considerable than it is would the SERM. VI.

[1] Εἰ χρώματα ὁ Θεὸς πεποιήκει, δύναμιν δὲ θεατικὴν αὐτῶν μὴ πεποιήκει, τί ἂν ἦν ὄφελος; οὐδοτιοῦν· ἀλλ' ἀνάπαλιν, εἰ τὴν μὲν δύναμιν πεποιήκει, τὰ ὄντα δὲ μὴ τοιαῦτα, οἷα ὑποπίπτειν τῇ δυνάμει τῇ ὁρατικῇ, καὶ οὕτω τι ἦν ὄφελος; οὐδοτιοῦν τι δ' εἰ καὶ ἀμφότερα ταῦτα πεποιήκει, φῶς δὲ μὴ πεποιήκει· οὐδ' οὕτω τι ὄφελος· τίς οὖν ὁ ἁρμόσας τοῦτο πρὸς ἐκεῖνο, καὶ ἐκεῖνο πρὸς τοῦτο; Epict. i. 6.

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goodly light itself be, were all things in nature blind, and uncapable to discern thereby? What would the ear serve for, if the air were not suitably disposed (made neither too thick nor too thin; neither too resty nor too fleeting, but) in a due consistency, and capable of moderate undulations distinguishable thereby? The like we might with the same reason inquire concerning the other senses and faculties, vital or animal, and their respective objects, which we may observe with admirable congruity respecting each other. Have not all those goodly colours, and comely shapes, which in the leaves, the flowers, and the fruits of plants (I might add in gems and precious stones; yea in all sorts of living creatures) we behold, an evident respect to the sight, and the sight a no less visible reference to them? Those many kinds of pleasant fragrancy in herbs, flowers, and spices, have they not a like manifest relation to the smell, and it to them? Could all that great variety of wholesome, savoury, and delicious fruits, herbs, grains, pulses, seeds, and roots become so constantly produced, otherwise than for the purpose of feeding and sustaining living creatures with pleasure and content? Is there not a notorious correspondence between them and the organs of taste, digestion, and nutrition? Are there not appetites prompting, yea with intolerable pain provoking each living creature to seek its proper sustenance? and doth it not find in the enjoyment hereof a pleasure and satisfaction unexpressible? Let me add: whence comes it to pass, that ordinarily in nature nothing occurs noisome or troublesome to any sense; but all things wholesome and comfortable, at least innocent or inoffensive? that we may wander all about without

being urged to shut our eyes, to stop our ears, our mouths, our noses; but rather invited to open all the avenues of our soul, for admission of the kind entertainments nature sets before us? Doth she not every where present spectacles of delight (somewhat of lively picture, somewhat of gay embroidery, somewhat of elegant symmetry) to our eyes, however seldom any thing appears horrid or ugly to them? Where is it that we meet with noises so violent, or so jarring, as to offend our ears? is not there rather provided for us, wherever we go, some kind of harmony grateful to them; not only in fields and woods the sweet chirping of birds; by rivers the soft warbling of the streams; but even the rude winds whistle in a tune not unpleasant; the tossing seas yield a kind of solemn and graver melody? All the air about us, is it not (not only not noisome to our smell, but) very comfortable and refreshing? and doth not even the dirty earth yield a wholesome and medicinal scent? So many, so plain, so exactly congruous are the relations of things here about us each to other; which surely could not otherwise come than from one admirable wisdom and power conspiring thus to adapt and connect them together; as also from an equal goodness, declared in all these things being squared so fitly for mutual benefit and convenience. These considerations are applicable to all (even to the meaner sorts of) animals; which being the only creatures capable of joy and pleasure, or liable to grief and pain, it was fit, that insensible things should be disposed to serve their needs and uses; which hath been with so wonderful a care performed, that of so vast a number among them there is none so vile or contemptible, (no worm, no SERM. IV.

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fly, no insect,) for whose maintenance, whose defence, whose satisfaction, competent (shall I say, or abundant) provision hath not been made, both intrinsecal (by a frame of organs fitting them to obtain and to enjoy what is good for them, to shun and repel what is bad; by strong appetites inciting them to search after and pursue, or to beware and decline respectively; by strange instincts enabling them to distinguish between what is fit for them to procure or embrace, to remove or avoid;) and extrinsecal also, by a great variety of conveniences, answerable to their several desires and needs, dispersed all about, and every where, as it were, offered to them. So that the holy Psalmist (considering this, and taking upon him to be, as it were, their chaplain) had reason to say this grace for them: *The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.* But especially (that which as reason enables us, so due gratitude obliges us, and prompts us especially to observe) there is an evident regard (so evident, that even Pliny, a professed Epicurean, could not forbear acknowledging it) which all things bear to man, the prince of creatures visible; [k]they being all as on purpose ordered to yield tribute unto him; to supply his wants, to gratify his desires; with profit and plea-

Psal. cxlv. 15, 16.

[k] Ejus (hominis) causa videtur cuncta alia genuisse natura. *Plin.* lib. vi. cap. 1.

Ut omnis rerum naturæ pars tributum aliquod nobis conferret. *Sen. de Benef.* 4, 5.

Neque enim necessitatibus tantummodo nostris provisum est; usque in delicias amamur. *Ibid.*

Ut interdum pronœa nostra Epicurea esse videatur. *Cic. de N. D.* 2.

sure to exercise his faculties; to content, as it were, even his humour and curiosity. All things about us do minister (or at least may do so, if we would improve the natural instruments, and the opportunities afforded us) to our preservation, ease, or delight. The hidden bowels of the earth yield us treasures of metals and minerals, quarries of stone and coal, so necessary, so serviceable to divers good uses, that we could not commodiously be without them; the vilest and most common stones we tread on (even in that we tread on them) are useful, and serve to many good purposes beside[1]: the surface of the earth how is it bespread all over, as a table well furnished, with variety of delicate fruits, herbs, and grains to nourish our bodies, to please our tastes, to cheer our spirits, to cure our diseases! how many fragrant and beautiful flowers offer themselves for the comfort of our smell and the delight of our sight! Neither can our ears complain, since every wood breeds a quire of natural musicians, ready to entertain them with easy and unaffected harmony. The woods, I say, which also adorned with stately trees afford us a pleasant view and a refreshing shade, shelter from weather and sun, fuel for our fires, materials for our houses and our shipping; with divers other needful utensils. Even the barren mountains send us down fresh streams of water, so necessary to the support of our lives, so profitable for the fructification of our grounds, so commodious for conveyance of our wares, and maintaining intercourse among us. Yea SERM. VI.

[1] Vera est sententia Stoicorum, qui aiunt nostra causa mundum esse constructum. Omnia enim quibus constat, quæque generat ex se mundus, ad utilitatem hominis accommodata sunt. *Lact. de Ira*, 13.

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the wide seas are not (altogether improfitable) wastes; but freely yield us, without our tillage, many rich harvests, transmitting our commerce and traffick, furnishing our tables with stores of dainty fish, supplying the bottles of heaven with waters to refresh the earth, being inexhaustible cisterns, from whence our rivers and fountains are derived; the very rude and boisterous winds themselves fulfil God's word (which once commanded all things to be good, and approved them to be so) by yielding manifold services to us; in brushing and cleansing the air for our health, in driving forward our ships, (which without their friendly help could not stir,) in gathering together, in scattering, in spreading abroad the clouds; the clouds, those paths of God, *which drop fatness* upon our fields and pastures. As for our living subjects, all the inferior sorts of animals, it is hardly possible to reckon the manifold benefits we receive from them; how many ways they supply our needs with pleasant food and convenient clothing, how they ease our labour, how they promote even our recreation and sport. Thus have all things upon this earth (as is fit and seemly they should have) by the wise and gracious disposal of the great Creator, a reference to the benefit of its noblest inhabitant, most worthy and most able to use them: many of them have an immediate reference to man, (as necessary to his being, or conducible to his well-being; being fitted thereto, to his hand, without his care, skill, or labour,) others a reference to him, more mediate indeed, yet as reasonable to suppose; I mean such things, whose usefulness doth in part depend upon the exercise of our reason, and the instruments subservient thereto: for what is use-

Ps. cxlviii. 8.

Ps. lxv. 11, 12, &c.

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ıl by the help of reason, doth as plainly refer to the benefit of a thing naturally endowed with that faculty, s what is agreeable to sense refers to a thing merely ensitive: we may therefore, for instance, as reasonbly suppose, that iron was designed for our use, hough first we be put to dig for it, then must employ ıany arts, and much pains before it become fit for ur use; as that the stones were therefore made, which ie open to our view; and which without any prearation we easily apply to the pavement of our treets, or the raising of our fences: also, the grain ve sow in our grounds, or the trees which we plant ı our orchards, we have reason to conceive as well rovided for us, as those plants which grow wildly nd spontaneously; for that sufficient means are betowed on us of compassing such ends, and rendering hose things useful to us, (a reason able to contrive vhat is necessary in order thereto, and a hand ready o execute,) it being also reasonable, that something hould be left for the improvement of our reason, and mployment of our industry, lest our noblest powers hould languish and decay by sloth, or want of fit xercise.

Epict. i. 16.

—Pater ipse colendi. Haud facilem esse viam voluit, &c.—Curis acuens mortalia corda. *Virg.*

Well then, is it to a fortuitous necessity (or a neessary chance) that we owe all these choice accomıodations and preeminences of nature? must we less and worship fortune for all this? did she so specially love us, and tender our good? was she so ıdulgent toward us, so provident for us in so many hings, in every thing; making us the scope of all er workings and motions here about us? Must we hange style, and say, fortune pours down blessings n our heads, fortune crowns us with lovingkindess, fortune daily loads us with her benefits? Shall

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we not only esteem these good things her gifts, but even acknowledge ourselves her offsprings, and reverence her as our mother; disclaiming so noble a parent, as Wisdom Omnipotent; disowning so worthy a benefactor, as Sovereign Goodness? O brutish degeneracy! O hellish depravedness of mind! Are we not, not only wretchedly blind and stupid, if we are not able to discern so clear beams of wisdom shining through so many perspicuous correspondences; if we cannot trace the Divine power by footsteps so express and remarkable; if we cannot read so legible characters of transcendent goodness; but extremely unworthy and ungrateful, if we are not ready to acknowledge, and with hearty thankfulness to celebrate all these excellent perfections, by which all these things have been so ordered, as to conspire and cooperate for our benefit? Methinks the very perception of so much good, the continual enjoyment of so many accommodations, the frequent satisfaction of so many senses and appetites, should put us in so good humour, that when we feel our hearts replenished with food and gladness, when we so delightfully relish nature's dainties, when we with pleasure view this fair scene of things, when our ears are ravished with harmonious sounds, when our spirits are exhilarated with those natural perfumes shed about our gardens, our woods, and our fields, we should not be able to forbear devoutly crying out with the Psalmist; *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches: The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy and bounty: Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindful of him! or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him?* that

Οὐχ ἑαυτὸν ἀμάρτυρον ἀφῆκεν, ἀγαθουργιῶν, &c. Acts xiv. 17.

Acts xiv. 17.

Ps. civ. 24.

Ps. cxix. 64. xxxiii. 5. viii. 4. cxliv. 3.

thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, and hast put all things under his feet? Under his feet; and such in a manner, according to proper and direct meaning, are all those things which we have as yet touched upon; so many arguments of the divinity even looking downwards, as it were, (if we do not so look rather like beasts than men,) we may upon this little spot of our habitation perceive: but if, employing our peculiar advantage, we lift up our eyes and minds towards heaven, there in a larger volume, and in a brighter character, we shall behold the testimonies of perfection, and majesty stupendous described: as our eyes are dazzled with the radiant light coming thence, so must the vast amplitude, the stately beauty, the decent order, the steady course, the beneficial efficacy of those glorious lamps astonish our minds, fixing their attention upon them; he that shall, I say, consider with what precise regularity and what perfect constancy those (beyond our imagination) vast bodies perform their rapid motions, what pleasure, comfort, and advantage their light and heat do yield us, how their kindly influences conduce to the general preservation of all things here below, (impregnating the womb of this cold and dull lump of earth with various sorts of life, with strange degrees of activity,) how necessary (or how convenient at least) the certain recourses of seasons made by them are; how can he but wonder, and wondering adore that transcendency of beneficent wisdom and power, which first disposed them into, which still preserves them in, such a state and order? That all of them should be so regulated, as for so many ages together, (even through all memo-

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ries of time,) to persist in the same posture, to retain the same appearances, not to alter discernibly in magnitude, in shape, in situation, in distance each from other; but to abide fixed, as it were, in their unfixedness, and steady in their restless motions; not to vary at all sensibly in the time of their revolution, (so that one year was ever observed to differ in an hour, or one day in a minute from another,) doth it not argue a constant will directing them, and a mighty hand upholding them[m]? it did so, Plutarch tells us, to the common apprehensions of men in ancient times; who from these observations deduced the existence and notion of a God; because, saith he, *they took notice that the sun, the moon, and the rest of the stars, taking their course about the earth, did constantly arise alike in their colours, equal in their bignesses, in the same places, and at the same times*[n]. Reason dictated to them what the inspired Psalmist sings concerning the heavenly host; that God *commanded, and they were created; he hath also stablished them for ever and ever, by a decree that shall not pass.* And surely, those celestial squadrons could never be ranged in a form so proper, and march on so regularly without the

Ps. cxlvii. 5, 6.

[m] Ordo autem siderum et in omni æternitate constantia neque naturam significat; est enim plena rationis: neque fortunam, quæ amica varietati constantiam respuit. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 16.

Οὐδέποτε οὖν ἐν χειμῶνι μακρὰ γέγονεν ἡ ἡμέρα, ὥσπερ οὐδέποτε ἐν θέρει μακρὰ γέγονεν ἡ νὺξ, τοσούτων παρελθουσῶν γενεῶν· ἀλλὰ ἐν τοσούτῳ διαστήματι καὶ μήκει, οὐδὲ ἀκαριαῖοι, οὐχ ἡμιάριον, οὐ ῥιπὴν ὀφθαλμοῦ ἡ ἑτέρα τὴν ἑτέραν ἐπλεονέκτησε. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. θ'.

[n] Ἀεί τε γὰρ ἥλιος καὶ σελήνη, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἄστρων τὴν ὑπόγειων φορὰν ἐνεχθέντα ὅμοια μὲν ἀνατέλλει τοῖς χρώμασιν, ἴσα δὲ τοῖς μεγέθεσι, καὶ κατὰ τόπους, καὶ κατὰ χρόνους τοὺς αὐτούς. Plut. de Plac. i. 6.

marshalling, and without the conduct of a most skilful captain. He that can seriously ascribe all this to an undisciplined and unconducted troop of atoms rambling up and down confusedly through the field of infinite space, what might he not as easily assert or admit? Certainly, he that can think so, can think any thing; and labour were vainly spent in further endeavour to convince him. So even pagan philosophers have judged; upon whom what impression this consideration hath made, we may learn from these words of one among them, Cicero: *Who*, saith he, *would call him a man, that beholding such certain motions of heaven, thus settled ranks of stars, all things there so connected and suited together, should deny there were a reason in them, or should affirm those things done by chance, which by no understanding we can reach with how great counsel they are performed?* And, *What other thing*, adds he, *can be so open and so perspicuous, to us that shall behold the heavens and contemplate things celestial, as that there is a most excellent Divinity, by which these things are governed*[o]*?* Thus do *the heavens declare the glory of God, and* SERM. VI. Isa. xl. 26. xlv. 12. Dan. iv. 35. Neb. ix. 6. Ps. xix. 1.

[o] Quis hunc hominem dixerit, qui cum tam certos cœli motus, tam ratos astrorum ordines, tamque inter se connexa et apta viderit, neget his ullam inesse rationem, eaque casu fieri dicat, quæ quanto consilio gerantur, nullo consilio assequi possumus? *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 38.

Quid potest esse tam apertum, tamque perspicuum, cum cœlum suspeximus, cœlestiaque contemplati sumus, quam aliquod esse numen præstantissimæ mentis, quo hæc regantur? *Ibid.* ii. 2.

Τὶς οὖν οὕτως ἄθλιος καὶ ταλαίπωρος, ὡς ὁρῶν μὲν οὐρανὸν, ὁρῶν δὲ θάλατταν καὶ γῆν, ὁρῶν δὲ τοσαύτην ὅλων εὐκρασίαν οὕτως ἀκριβῆ, καὶ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἀδιάπτωτον τάξιν, νομίζειν αὐτομάτως ταῦτα γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ μὴ προσκυνεῖν τὸν ἅπαντα ταῦτα μετὰ σοφίας τῆς προσηκούσης διαταξάμενον; Chrys. Ἀνδρ. θ'.

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the firmament sheweth his handywork: yea, thus we have reason to acknowledge with Nehemiah;

Neh. ix. 6. Isa. xxxvii. 16.

Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all. Thus, every thing above and below us, before and behind, on this, on that, on every side of us, yields more than a simple attestation to the existence of its glorious Maker; each of them singly, several of them together, giving their vote and suffrage thereto[p].

III. Yea, which was the last consideration intimated, all of them join together in one universal consort, with one harmonious voice, to proclaim one and the same wisdom to have designed, one and the same power to have produced, one and the same goodness to have set both wisdom and power on work in designing and in producing their being; in preserving and governing it[q]: for this whole system of things what is it, but one goodly body, as it were, compacted of several members and organs; so aptly compacted together, that each confers its being and its operation to the grace and ornament, to the strength and stability of the whole; one soul (of divine Providence) enlivening in a manner, and actuating it all? Survey it all over, and we shall have reason to say with the philosopher; *All the parts of the world are so constituted, that they could not be either better for use, nor more beautiful for*

[p] Quocunque te flexeris, ibi Deum videbis occurrentem tibi, &c. *Sen. de Benef.* iv. 8.

[q] —— ἐποίησεν ὡς ἀγαθὸς τὸ χρήσιμον, ὡς σοφὸς τὸ κάλλιστον, ὡς δυνατὸς τὸ μέγιστον. Bas. Hexaem. λ. *α*.

show[r]. In it we shall espy nothing in substance superfluous or defective; nothing in shape deformed, in position misplaced, in motion exorbitant, so as to prejudice the beauty or welfare of the whole[s]. We may perhaps not discern the use of each part, or the tendency of each particular effect; but of many they are so plain and palpable, that reason obliges us to suppose the like of the rest. Even as a person whom we observe frequently to act with great consideration and prudence, when at other times we cannot penetrate the drift of his proceedings, we must yet imagine that he hath some latent reason, some reach of policy, that we are not aware of; or, as in an engine consisting of many parts, curiously combined, whereof we do perceive the general use, and apprehend how divers parts thereof conduce thereto, reason prompts us (although we neither see them all, nor can comprehend the immediate serviceableness of some) to think they are all in some way or other subservient to the artist's design: such an agent is God, the wisdom of whose proceedings being in so many instances notorious, we ought to suppose it answerable in the rest; such an engine is this world, of which we may easily enough discern the general end, and how many of its parts do conduce thereto; and cannot therefore in reason but suppose the rest in their kind alike congruous, and conducible to the same purpose: our incapacity to discover all doth not argue any defect, but an excess of wisdom in the design thereof; not SERM. VI.

[r] Omnes mundi partes ita constitutæ sunt, ut neque ad usum meliores potuerint esse, nec ad speciem pulchriores. *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 34.

[s] Μηδὲν ἡ φύσις ποιεῖ μάτην, μηδὲ ἀπολείπει τῶν ἀναγκαίων. Arist. iii. de Anim. cap. 10.

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too little perfection in the work, but too great an one rather, in respect to our capacity: however, we plainly see the result of all to be the durable continuance of things, without interruption or change, in the same constant uniform state; which shews, that in the world there is no seed of corruption, as it were; [t]no inclination to dissolution or decay; nothing that tends to the discomposure or destruction of the whole: each ingredient thereof (of those so unconceivably numerous) consists within its proper limits; not encroaching immoderately upon, not devouring or disturbing another in its course; contrary qualities therein serving to a due temperament, opposite inclinations begetting a just poise, particular vicissitudes conferring to a general settlement; private deaths and corruptions maintaining the public life and health, producing a kind of youthful vigour in the whole: so that six thousand years together hath this great machine stood, always one and the same, unimpaired in its beauty, unworn in its parts, unwearied and undisturbed in its motions[u]. If then, as Plutarch says, *no fair thing is ever produced by*

[t] Ῥύσεις καὶ ἀλλοιώσεις ἀνανεοῦσι τὸν κόσμον διηνεκῶς. Anton. vi. 15. xii. 13.

Αἱ μὲν γενέσεις ἐπαναστέλλουσι τὰς φθοράς, αἱ δὲ φθοραὶ κουφίζουσι τὰς γενέσεις· μία δ' ἐκ πάντων περαινομένων σωτηρία διατελεῖ. Auct. de Mund. cap. v.

[u] Omnia pereundo servantur; omnia de interitu reformantur, &c. *Tertull. Apol.* cap. 48.

Ὁ μέγας καὶ θαυμαστὸς τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτοῦ κήρυξ. Greg. Naz. Or. 43.

——Ἕκαστον μένει καθάπερ τινὶ χαλινῷ καὶ δεσμῷ τῷ βουλήματι τῶ ποιήσαντος τοὺς οἰκείους διαφυλάττον ὅρους, καὶ ἡ μάχη τούτων εἰρήνης αἰτία γίνεται τῷ παντί. Chrys. Orat. 47, 48. tom. vi.

hazard, but with art framing it[x]; how could this most fair comprehension of all fair things be not the lawful issue of art, but a by-blow of fortune; of fortune, the mother only of broods monstrous and misshapen? [y] If the nature of any cause be discoverable by its effects; if from any work we may infer the workman's ability; if in any case the results of wisdom are distinguishable from the consequences of chance, we have reason to believe, that the Architect of this magnificent and beautiful frame was one incomprehensibly wise, powerful, and good Being; and to conclude with Cicero, ***Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque naturam, et eam suscipiendam, adorandamque hominum generi pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cœlestium cogit confiteri;*** the sense of which saying we cannot better render or express, than in St. Paul's words; ***The invisible things of God by the making*** (or rather by the make and constitution) ***of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;*** so that, I adjoin after him, ***they are inexcusable, who*** from hence ***do not know God;*** or knowing him do not render unto him his due glory and service.

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Κόσμος καλὸν παίγνιον Τίτανος σοφοῦ. Eurip.

Cic. ii. de Nat. Deor. pag. 89. Ἀριστοτέχνας. Epitheton Dei. *Pind.*

Rom. i. 20.

[x] Οὐδὲν τῶν καλῶν εἰκῇ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχε γίνεται, ἀλλὰ μετά τινος τέχνης δημιουργούσης. Plut. de Plac. i. 6.

[y] Quod si mundum efficere potest concursus atomorum, cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest, quæ sunt multo minus operosa, et multo quidem faciliora? *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* ii. 37.

I Believe in God,

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THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM THE FRAME OF HUMAN NATURE.

GEN. i. 27.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.

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THE belief of God's existence is the foundation of all religion, if which be not well laid in our minds by convincing reasons, the superstructures standing thereon may easily be in danger of being shaken and ruined; especially being assailed by the winds of temptation and opposition, which every where blow so violently in this irreligious age. No discourses therefore can perhaps be more needful, (or seasonably useful,) than such as do produce and urge reasons of that kind, apt to establish that foundation. Of such there be, I conceive, none better, or more suitable to common capacity, than those, which are drawn from effects apparent to men's general observation and experience, the which cannot reasonably be ascribed to any other cause, than unto God; that is, (according to the notion commonly answering to that name,) to a Being incomprehensibly wise, powerful, and good.

Of such effects there be innumerably many in this sensible world among things natural, more strictly so called, that is, subsisting and acting without immediate use of understanding or choice; the constitutions and operations of which (being evidently directed according to very much reason, and to very good purpose) do evince their being framed and ordered by such a Being; as I have formerly, with a competent largeness, endeavoured to shew. But beside those, there is exposed to our observation, yea subject to our inward conscience, another sort of beings, acting in another manner, and from other principles; having in them a spring of voluntary motion and activity; not, as the rest, necessarily determined, or driven on, by a kind of blind violence, in one direct road to one certain end; but guiding themselves with judgment and choice, by several ways, toward divers ends; briefly, endued with reason, to know what and why; and with liberty, to choose what and how they should act; and that this sort of beings (that is, we ourselves, all mankind) did proceed from the same source or original cause, as it is in way of history delivered and affirmed in our text, so I shall now endeavour by reason (apt to persuade even those who would not allow this sacred authority) to shew. Indeed, if the *eternal power and divinity of God may*, as St. Paul tells us, *be seen in all the works of God;* the same peculiarly and principally will appear observable in this masterpiece, as it were, of the great Artificer; if the meanest creatures reflect somewhat of light, by which we may discern the Divine existence and perfections; in this fine and best polished mirror we shall more clearly discover the same: no where so

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much of God will appear as in this work, which was designedly formed to resemble and represent him. This then is the subject of our present Discourse, That in man, well considered, we may discern manifest footsteps of that incomprehensibly excellent Being impressed upon him; and this doubly, both in each man singly taken, and in men as standing in conjunction or relation to each other: considering man's nature, we shall have reason to think it to have proceeded from God; considering human societies, we shall see cause to suppose them designed and governed by God.

I. Consider we first any one single man, or that human nature abstractedly, whereof each individual person doth partake; and whereas that doth consist of two parts, one material and external, whereby man becomes a sensible part of nature, and hath an eminent station among visible creatures; the other, that interior and invisible principle of operations peculiarly called human: as to the former, we did, among other such parts of nature, take cognizance thereof, and even in that discovered plain marks of a great wisdom that made it, of a great goodness taking care to maintain it. The other now we shall chiefly consider, in which we may discern not only σημεῖα, but ὁμοιώματα, of the Divine existence and efficiency; not only large tracks, but express footsteps; not only such signs as smoke is of fire, or a picture of the painter that drew it; but even such, as the spark is of fire, and the picture of its original.

1. And first, that man's nature did proceed from some efficient cause, it will (as of other things of nature) be reasonable to suppose. For if not so, then it must either spring up of itself, so that at some de-

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ɛrminate beginning of time, or from all eternity, ɔme one man, or some number of men did of themɛlves exist; or there hath been a succession, without eginning, of continual generations indeterminate, ıot terminated in any root, one or more, of singular ersons.)

Now generally, that man did not at any time in ny manner spring up of himself, appears, 1. From istory and common tradition; which (as we shall therwhere largely shew) deliver the contrary; being herein more credible than bare conjecture or prearious assertion, destitute of testimony or proof. . From the present constant manner of man's prouction, which is not by spontaneous emergency, but ı way of successive derivation, according to a method dmirably provided for by nature. 3. Because if ver man did spring up of himself, it should be reaonable that at any time, that often, that at least ometime in so long a course of times, the like hould happen, which yet no experience doth attest. ·. There is an evident relation between our bodies nd souls; the members and organs of our bodies being ronderfully adapted to serve the operations of our ouls. Now in our bodies (as we have before shewed) here appear plain arguments of a most wise Author hat contrived and framed them; therefore in no ikelihood did our souls arise of themselves, but owe heir being to the same wise Cause.

Also particularly, that not any men did at some ıeginning of time spring up of themselves is evident, ıecause there is even in the thing itself a repugıance; and it is altogether unconceivable that any hing, which once hath not been, should ever come o be without receiving its being from another: and

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supposing such a rise of any thing, there could not in any case be any need of an efficient cause; since any thing might purely out of nothing come to be of itself.

Neither could any man so exist from eternity, both from the general reasons assigned, which being grounded in the nature of the thing, and including no respect to this circumstance of now and then, do equally remove this supposition, (for what is in itself unapt or unnecessary or improbable to be now, was always alike so; the being from eternity or in time not altering the nature of the thing;) and also particularly, because there are no footsteps or monuments of man's (not to say eternal, but even) ancient standing in the world; but rather many good arguments (otherwhere touched) of his late coming thereinto; which consideration did even convince Epicurus and his followers, and made them acknowledge man to be a novel production. I add, seeing it is necessary to suppose some eternal and self-subsistent Being distinct from man, and from any other particular sensible being, (for there is no such being, which in reason can be supposed author of the rest; but rather all of them bear characters signifying their original from a Being more excellent than themselves;) and such an one being admitted, there is no need or reason to suppose any other, (especially man and all others appearing unapt so to subsist,) therefore it is not reasonable to ascribe eternal self-subsistence to man. This discourse I confirm with the suffrage of Aristotle himself; who in his Physics hath these words: *In natural things, that which is definite and better, if possible, must rather exist: but it suffices, that one, the first of things immove-*

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able, being eternal, should be to others the original of motion [a]; (I subjoin, and by parity of reason it is sufficient, that one and the best thing be eternally subsistent of itself, and the cause of subsistence to the rest.)

As for the last supposition, that there have been indeterminate successions of men, without beginning, it is also liable to most of the former exceptions, beside that it is altogether unintelligible, and its having this peculiar difficulty in it, that it ascribes determinate effects to causes indeterminate. And indeed it hath been to no other purpose introduced, than to evade the arguments arising from the nature of the thing, by confounding the matter with impertinent intrigues, such as the terms of infinite and indeterminate must necessarily produce in man's shallow understanding. I therefore, upon such grounds, assume it as a reasonable supposition, that man's nature is nowise *αὐτοφυὴς, but hath proceeded from some cause.

(* hath not sprung up of itself.)

2. I adjoin, secondly, that it could not come from any sensible or material cause, nor from any complication of such causes; for that the properties, the powers, the operations of man's soul are wholly different from in kind, highly elevated in worth, above all the properties, powers, and operations of things corporeal, in what imaginable manner soever framed or tempered: the properties, faculties, and operations of our souls are, or refer to, several sorts or ways of knowledge, (sense, fancy, memory, discourse, mental intuition;) of willing, (that is, of appetite toward

[a] Ἐν γὰρ τοῖς φύσει δεῖ τὸ πεπερασμένον, καὶ τὸ βέλτιστον, ἐὰν ἐνδέχηται, ὑπάρχειν μᾶλλον· ἱκανὸν δὲ καὶ εἰ ἓν, τὸ πρῶτον τῶν ἀκινήτων ἀΐδιον ὄν, ἔσται τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀρχὴ κινήσεως. Phys. viii. 7.

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and choice of good, or of disliking and refusing evil;) of passion, (that is, of sensible complacency or displeasure in respect to good and evil apprehended under several notions and circumstances;) of αὐτοκινησία, or self-moving, (the power and act of moving without any force extrinsecal working upon it.) The general properties of things corporeal are extension according to several dimensions and figures; aptness to receive motion from, or to impart motion unto, each other in several degrees and proportions of velocity; to divide and unite, or to be divided and united each by other; and the like, coherent with and resulting from those: now to common sense it seems evident, that those properties and these are *toto genere* different from each other; nor have any conceivable similitude unto, connection with, dependence upon each other, as to their immediate nature. Let any part of this corporeal mass be refined by the subtlest division, let it be agitated by the quickest motion, let it be modelled into what shape or fashion you please; how can any man imagine either knowledge or appetite or passion thence to result? or that it should thence acquire a power of moving itself, or another adjacent body? Even, I say, this inferior locomotive faculty is too high for matter, by any change it can undergo, to obtain: for we (as inward experience, or conscience of what we do may teach us) determine ourselves commonly to action, and move the corporeal instruments subject to our will and command, not by force of any precedent bodily impression or impulse, but either according to mere pleasure, or in virtue of somewhat spiritual and abstracted from matter, acting upon us, not by a physical energy, but by moral representation, in a man-

er more easily conceived than expressed; (for no SERM. VII.
an surely is so dull, that he cannot perceive a huge
ifference between being dragged by a violent hand,
nd drawn to action by a strong reason; although
may puzzle him to express that difference:) such
proposition of truth, such an apprehension of events
ossible, such an appearance of good or evil conse-
uent, (things no where existent without us, nor
aving in them any thing of corporeal subsistence;
or therefore capable of corporeal operation,) are all
ne engines that usually impel us to action; and
nese, by a voluntary application of our minds, (by
ollecting and digesting, severing and rejecting, sift-
ng and moulding the present single representations
f things, by an immediate interior power, independ-
nt from any thing without us,) we frame within
urselves. And even such a self-moving or self-
etermining power we cannot anywise conceive to
e in, or to arise from, any part of this corporeal
nass, however shaped or sized, however situated or
gitated: much less can we well apprehend the
nore noble faculties to be seated in or to spring
rom it; of them the grossest and the finest, the
lowest and the nimblest, the roughest and the
moothest bodies are alike capable, or rather unlike,
ncapable. To think a gross body may be ground
nd pounded into rationality, a slow body may be
humped and driven into passion, a rough body may
e filed and polished into a faculty of discerning and
esenting things; that a cluster of pretty thin round
toms, (as Democritus forsooth conceited,) that a Arist. de An. i. 2.
vell mixed combination of elements, (as Empedocles
ancied,) that a harmonious contemperation (or crasis)
f humours, (as Galen, dreaming it seems upon his

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drugs and his potions, would persuade us,) that an implement made up of I know not what fine springs, and wheels, and such mechanic knacks, (as some of our modern wizards have been busy in divining,) should, without more to do, become the subject of so rare capacities and endowments, the author of actions so worthy, and works so wonderful; capable of wisdom and virtue, of knowledge so vast, and of desires so lofty; apt to contemplate truth, and affect good; able to recollect things past, and to foresee things future; to search so deep into the causes of things, and disclose so many mysteries of nature; to invent so many arts and sciences, to contrive such projects of policy, and achieve such feats of prowess; briefly, should become capable to design, undertake, and perform all those admirable effects of human wit and industry which we daily see and hear of; how senseless and absurd conceits are these! how can we, without great indignation and regret, entertain such suppositions! No, no; it is both ridiculous fondness and monstrous baseness for us to own any parentage from, or any alliance to, things so mean, so very much below us. It is indeed observable, that no man can well, or scarce any man hath disowned the receiving his being from God, but hath also in a manner disavowed his own being what he is; that no man, denying God, hath not also withal denied himself; denied himself to be a man; renounced his reason, his liberty, and other perfections of his nature; rather than acknowledge himself so well descended, hath been ready to confess himself no more than a beast, yea much less than probably beasts are; a mere corporeal machine, a ball of fate and chance, a thing violently tossed and tumbled up and

down by bodies all about it. But let these degenerate men vilify their own nature, and disparage themselves as they please, yet those noble perfections of our soul speak its extraction from a higher stock; we cannot, if we consider them well, but acknowledge that,

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Mentem e cœlesti demissam traximus arce;

or, as Epicharmus said of old, that *man's reason did sprout from the Divine reason;* they plainly discover their original to be from a cause itself understanding and knowing, willing freely, resenting things, (if I may so speak,) and moving of itself in a more excellent manner and degree.

ὁ γὰρ ἀνθρώπου λόγος φύεται ἀπὸ τοῦ θείου λόγου. Epic. Cl. Alex. Ser. v. pag. 441.

And indeed it is very considerable to our purpose, that while we assert the existence of God, we assert no other thing to be, than such as whereof we can assign a manifest instance or example, as it were, although in degree much inferior; for what can in any degree exist, it is not hard to conceive that possible to exist in any degree, how high soever; what is in kind possible, is in any perfection of degree possible; yea, what we see in a lower degree somewhere to exist, doth probably otherwhere exist in higher perfection. There is therefore scarce any attribute commonly ascribed to God, the existence whereof we cannot shew possible, yea very credible, by shewing some degree, (I use this word in a large and popular sense, not regarding scholastical nicety,) some participation, some semblance (or, if you please, some shadow) thereof discernible in man; he being indeed a small picture, as it were, wherein God hath drawn and represented himself, giving us to read that of himself in this small volume, which in its proper character and size we could never be able to

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apprehend; each letter, each line of his excellency being in itself too large for our eye perfectly to view and comprehend.

3. We are, I say, not only God's works, but his children; our souls bearing in their countenance and complexion divers express features of him; especially as at first they were made, and as by improvement of our capacities they may again become. [b] In the substance of man's soul, in its union with things corporeal, in its properties and powers, we may observe divers such resemblances, declaring it in a manner to be what Seneca did say of it, *a little God harboured in human body.* For as God, (*inhabiting light inaccessible,*) being himself invisible, and subject to no sense, discovers himself by manifold effects of wisdom and power; so doth our soul, itself immediately exposed to no sense, shew itself by many works of art and industry, wherein she imitates nature and the works of God; although her works in fineness and greatness do indeed come infinitely short of his.

Deus in humano corpore hospitans.

As God by his presence and influence doth, as the

[b] ————quid mirum noscere mundum
Si possunt homines, quibus est et mundus in ipsis,
Exemplumque Dei quisque est in imagine parva? *Manil.* 4.

Trismeg. χ'. Διὸ τολμιτέον ἐστὶν, τὸν μὲν ἄνθρωπον ἐπίγειον, εἶναι θεὸν θνητόν· τὸν δὲ οὐράνιον εἶναι θεὸν, ἀθάνατον ἄνθρωπον.

Quem in hoc mundo locum Deus obtinet, hunc in homine animus; quod est illuc materia, id in nobis corpus est. *Sen. Ep.* 65.

Deum te scito esse: siquidem Deus est, qui viget, qui sentit, qui meminit, qui providet, qui tam regit, et movet, et moderatur id corpus, cui præpositus est, quam hunc mundum princeps ille Deus; et ut ipsum mundum ex quadam parte mortalem Deus æternus, sic fragile corpus animus sempiternus movet. *Cic. in Somn. Scip.*

philosopher speaks, *contain and keep together the whole frame of things*, so that he withdrawing them, it would fall of itself into corruption and ruin; so doth the soul, by its union and secret energy upon the body, connect the parts of its body, and preserve it from dissolution, which presently, they being removed, do follow. SERM. VII.

Περιέχει πᾶσαν φύσιν. Arist. de Mundo.

Δεικτὶ ἡ ψυχὴ τὸ σῶμα συνέχειν ἐξελθούσης οὖν διασπίται καὶ σήπεται. Arist. de An. i. 9.

As he, in a manner beyond our conception, without any proper extension or composition of parts, doth coexist with, penetrateth, and passeth through all things; [c] so is she, in a manner also unconceivable, every where present within her bounds, and penetrates all the dimensions of her little world.

As he incomprehensibly, by a word of his mind, or by a mere act of will, doth move the whole frame or any part of nature; so doth she, we cannot tell how, by thinking only, and by willing, wield her body, and determine any member thereof to motion.

As he, not confined by the extension or duration of things, doth at one simple view behold all things, not only present, but past and future, yea, whenever, wherever, however possible; [d] so doth she, making wide excursions out of her narrow mansion in an instant, as it were, or with a marvellous agility, transcend any fixed bounds of time or place; surveys in her thought the most remote regions, stop-

[c] Ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τοῖς τῆς διανοίας κινήμασι πάσῃ κατ' ἐξουσίαν ἐφαπλοῦται τῇ κτίσει, καὶ μέχρις οὐρανῶν ἀνιοῦσα, καὶ τῶν ἀβύσσων ἐπιβατεύουσα, καὶ τῷ πλάτει τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐπερχομένη, &c. Greg. Nyss. Cat. c. 10.

[d] Magna et generosa res est humanus animus, in immensum se extendit, nec ullos sibi poni nisi communes cum Deo terminos patitur. Sen. Ep. 102.

Πῶς μετρῇ τόπῳ, καὶ νοῦς οὐ χωρίζεται, ἀλλ' ἐν ταυτῷ μένων πάντα ἐπέρχεται; Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

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ping nowhere, and passing over the world's bounds into spaces void and imaginary; reviews ages long since past, and looks forward into those long after to come; sees things in their causes, and, as it were, beyond them, even the possibilities of things that never shall be.

Ὁ Θεὸς οὐδὲν μάτην ποιεῖ. Arist.

As he performs nothing rashly or vainly, but always with wisest design to the best end; so doth she never set herself on action without some drift, or aim at good apparent to her.

[e] As he among all the agitations and changes of things without him abides himself immoveable, impassible, and immutable; so is she, immediately at least, not disturbed, not altered, not affected by the various motions that surround her; they do not touch her, they cannot stir her; among the many tumults and tempests blustering all about her, she can retain a steady calm and rest: Aristotle himself concluded her to be unmoveable, impassible, unmixed, and uncompounded [f].) So fair characters are there of the Divine nature engraven upon man's soul: but one chief property thereof we have not as yet touched; whereof, alas! the lineaments are more faint and less discernible; they being in themselves originally most tender and delicate, and thence apt by our unhappy degeneration to suffer the most, and have thence accordingly been most defaced; goodness I mean; whereof yet, I shall not doubt to say, many goodly relics are extant, and may be ob-

[e] Τάξας λογικοῦ καὶ ἀλόγου κράματος τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ζῶον λογικὸν συνεστήσατο, καὶ συνέδησε μυστικῶς τε καὶ ἀῤῥήτως τὸν χοῦν τῷ νοΐ, καὶ τὸν νοῦν τῷ πνεύματι. Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

[f] Ἕν τι τῶν ἀδυνάτων τὸ ὑπάρχειν αὐτῇ κίνησιν. de An. i. 3. ἀπαθής. de An. i. 5. iii. 5, 6, &c. ἀμιγὴς, ἁπλοῦς. iii. 6, &c.

served therein. There do remain, dispersed in the soil of human nature, divers seeds of goodness, of benignity, of ingenuity, which being cherished, excited, and quickened by good culture, do, to common experience, thrust out flowers very lovely, yield fruits very pleasant of virtue and goodness. We see that even the generality of men are prone to approve the laws and rules directing to justice, sincerity, and beneficence; to commend actions suitable unto them, to honour persons practising according to them; as also to distaste, detest, or despise such men, whose principles or tempers incline them to the practice of injury, fraud, malice, and cruelty[g]; yea, even them men generally are apt to dislike, who are so addicted to themselves as to be backward to do good to others. Yea no man can act according to those rules of justice and goodness without satisfaction of mind; no man can do against them without inward self-condemnation and regret, (as St. Paul did observe for us.) No man hardly is so savage, in whom the receiving kindnesses doth not beget a kindly sense, and an inclination (*eo nomine*, for that cause barely) to return the like; which inclination cannot well be ascribed to any other principle than somewhat of ingenuity innate to man[h].

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Rom. ii. 15.

All men, I suppose, feel in themselves (if at least

[g] Quæ autem natio non comitatem, non benignitatem, non gratum animum, et beneficii memorem diligit? quæ superbos, quæ maleficos, quæ crudeles, quæ ingratos non aspernatur, non odit? Tic. *de Leg.* i. pag. 305.

[h] Quid tam laudabile, quid tam æqualiter in omnium animos receptum, quam referre bene meritis gratiam? *Sen. de Benef.* iv. 6.

Huic uni rei non posuimus legem, tanquam satis natura caisset. *Ibid.* iv. 17.

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not hardened by villainous custom) a disposition prompting them to commiserate, yea (even with some trouble and some damage to themselves) to succour and relieve them who are in want, pain, or any distress; even mere strangers, and such from whom they can expect no return of benefit or advantage to themselves.

Many examples occur, in experience and in history, of men, who, from dictates of common reason and natural inclinations, (which in this case are not to be separated, both arising from the same source of human nature,) have been very apt freely and liberally to impart unto others somewhat of any good thing they possessed; to sacrifice their own ease, pleasure, profit unto others' benefit; to undergo great pains and hazards for public good, (the good of their family, of their friends, of their country, of mankind in general;) and all this without any hope of recompense; except perhaps that commonly they might have some regard to the approbation and acceptance, to the good-will and gratitude of them, whom their beneficence obliged; which in real esteem is no great derogation to their noble performances; and argues only, there is, together with such a laudable benignity or goodness of nature, (to excite and enliven it,) implanted a natural ambition also, or generosity in man's soul; which being well moderated seems not culpable; since God himself, in return to his most free beneficence, doth expect and require somewhat of thanks and praise; so much as we are able to render to him.

Vicit amor patriæ, laudumque cupido.

Yea, (although our adversaries will scarce admit so much, for that not supposing any good original, they are unwilling to allow any good derivative:

they are as ready to exclude all humanity as divinity; they have commonly, as no opinion of God, so no good opinion of men; feeling little good in themselves, they are willing to think less to be in others; so projecting to excuse themselves, and shroud their own particular faults under the covert of a general naughtiness,) [i] I doubt not to say, there have been many persons in all ages full of very single and sincere good-will toward men, heartily desiring the public good, and compassionating the evils of mankind; ready with their best endeavours to procure and promote the one, to prevent and remove the other, from principles of mere ingenuity or pure nobleness; that with unmoveable resolution have persisted in courses tending to such ends, although in them they have encountered dangers, disgraces, and troubles from the ingrateful world, or rather from some men prevalent therein, their envy or spite. SERM. VII.

In fine, the wisest observers of man's nature have pronounced him to be a creature gentle and sociable, inclinable to and fit for conversation, apt to keep good order, to observe rules of justice, to embrace any sort of virtue, if well managed, if instructed by good discipline, if guided by good example, if living under the influence of wise laws and virtuous governors. Fierceness, rudeness, craft, malice, all perverse and intractable, all mischievous and vicious dispositions do grow among men (like weeds in any, even the best soil) and overspread the earth, from ζῶον ἥμερον. ζῶον πολιτικόν.

[i] Nec est quisquam gentis ullius, qui ducem naturam nactus ad virtutem pervenire non possit. *Cic. de Leg.* 1.

Natura nos ad mentem optimam genuit, adeoque discere meliora volentibus promptum est, ut vere intuenti mirum sit illud magis malos esse tam multos. *Quintil.* xii. 11.

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neglect of good education; from ill conduct, ill custom, ill example; (it is the comparison of St. Chrysostom and of Plutarch[k].) It is favour therefore, I conceive, to their own habitual depravations of nature (or perhaps to some prejudicate opinions) which hath induced some men to make so disadvantageous a portraiture of human nature, in which nothing lightsome or handsome, no lines of candour or rectitude do appear, but all seems black and crooked; all is drawn over with dusky shades, and irregular features of base designfulness and malicious cunning; of suspicion, malignity, rapacity; which character were it true, (in that general extent, and not proper only to some monsters among men,) we need not further seek for hell, since as many men, so many fiends appear unto us. But so commodious living here; so many offices daily performed among men, of courtesy, mercy, and pity; so many constant observances of friendship and amity; so many instances of fidelity and gratitude; so much credit always (even among pagans and barbarians) preserved to justice and humanity, (humanity, that very name doth fairly argue for us,) do sufficiently confute those defamers and slanderers of mankind; do competently evidence, that all good inclinations are not quite banished the world, nor quite razed out of man's soul; but that even herein human na-

[k] Chrysost. tom. v. pag. 613. Καθάπερ ἡ γῆ, ὅταν λιπαρὰ καὶ πίων οὖσα τυγχάνῃ μὴ γεωργῆται δὲ, πολλὴν ἐπιδείκνυται τῶν ἀκανθῶν τὴν φορὰν, οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἡ φύσις ἡ ἡμετέρα καλὴ οὖσα διὰ τὸν παραγαγόντα, καὶ πρὸς τὸν τῆς ἀρετῆς καρπὸν ἐπιτηδείως ἔχουσα, &c.

Plut. de sera Num. Vind. pag. 978.—Εἰδὼς ὅσην μοῖραν ἀρετῆς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ φερόμεναι πρὸς γένεσιν ψυχαὶ βαδίζουσι, καὶ τὸ γενναῖον ὡς ἰσχυρὸν αὐτὰς, καὶ οὐκ ἐξίτηλον ἐπέφυκεν· ἐξανθεῖ δὲ παρὰ φύσιν τὴν κακίαν ὑπὸ τροφῆς, καὶ ὁμιλίας φαύλης φθειρόμενον, &c.

ture doth somewhat resemble its excellent original, the nature divine. SERM. VII.

Thus doth man's nature in its substance, as it were, its faculties, its manner of operation, resemble God: but we may further observe, that as children are indeed in complexion and feature usually born somewhat like to their parents, but grow daily more like unto them, (those smaller lineaments continually with their bulk and stature increasing and becoming more discernible;) so is man improvable to more exact resemblance of God; his soul hath appetites and capacities, by which well guided and ordered it soars and climbs continually in its affection and desire toward Divine perfection. Man hath an insatiable curiosity and greediness of knowledge, (*his eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor his ear filled with hearing;*) he never rests content with, but in a manner despises the notions already acquired; always striving to enlarge and enrich his mind with intellectual treasure. So doth he tend nearer to Divine omniscience. Eccles. i. 8.

And as his searches after truth, so his desires of good are in a manner boundless. No present, no definite good can long detain his liking, or fully content him: he soon doth suck it dry, and leaves it insipid; then longs and hunts after fresh entertainments: he seems poor to himself in the greatest plenty, and straitened in the most ample condition. In short, he ever aspires to somewhat more great and high than what he enjoys; finding in himself a kind of infinite (at least indefinite) ambition and covetousness, a restless tendency after further degrees of joy and happiness, so doth he shoot himself on toward that highest mark of Divine felicity.

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Being sensible of his own mortal and transitory condition, he yet seeks to live for ever in his name and memory, labours to perform memorable actions, rears lasting monuments of his art and knowledge, of his wealth and power, of his bounty and munificence, by all means studying and striving to commend himself to the regard of posterity; thus affects he another sort of likeness unto God, even a kind of immortality and eternity.

If also, being through Divine grace awakened out of that drowsy state, (which naturally in great measure hath seized upon all men,) he discovereth his moral or spiritual wants and imperfections; he is then apt to breathe and endeavour a nearer similitude to God, even in goodness, righteousness, and purity; to labour in getting continually his inclinations more rectified, and his passions better composed; in restraining, subduing, destroying inordinate self-love, with the sensuality, the perverseness, the pride, the malice growing from that evil root; in promoting all virtuous desires and affections, especially reverence toward God his father, and charity toward man his brother; neither then can he be at ease or well content, till he arrive in such dispositions of mind to that nearness of perfection which his capacities do admit. And a man thus qualified in degree, thus tending in desire toward higher perfection in goodness, is indeed the most lively image that can be framed of God; being, as St. Paul expresseth it, *renewed to an acknowledgment* (or better understanding of himself, of his Maker, of true goodness) *according to the image of him that made him.* I might also propound to your consideration that φίλτρον φυσικὸν τὸ πρὸς τὸν Κτίσαντα,

εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν. Coloss. iii. 10.

Orig. in Cels. Testimoni-

as one of our Fathers doth call it,) that *natural proclivity observable in man to acknowledge and worship God;* to embrace religion both in opinion and practice, and especially on all occasions of need or distress to have recourse unto him, as an argument of his relation to God. It is, we see, common in nature for all creatures to be readily acquainted with their parents, to run after them, to expect from them supply of wants, succour in straits, refuge and defence in dangers; from hence we may easily discern to what parent any child belongs: and since there appears the like instinct and capacity innate to man, (and indeed to him alone, whence some philosophers thought good from this property to define man, a creature capable of religion[1]; since he is apt to entertain notions of God, to bear in his mind awe and respect toward him; since he is ready in all his straits (when other helps and hopes fail him) to lift up his heart and voice toward Heaven for assistance; why may we not in like manner hence discern, and with like reason infer, that man is also in especial manner God's child and offspring?

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um animæ naturaliter religiosæ. *Tertull.*

I might also adjoin, that the very power of framing conceptions, although imperfect and inadequate, concerning God, is in itself a faculty so very spiritual and sublime, that it argues something divine in man's soul. [m] *That like is known by its like,* was an axiom among ancient philosophers; and that

[1] Animal religionis capax.

Animus—hoc habet argumentum divinitatis suæ, quod illum divina delectant. *Sen. Nat.* quæst. 1. præf.

[m] Arist. de An. i. 2. γινώσκεσθαι ὁμοίῳ ὅμοιον.

Quis cœlum possit nisi cœli munere nosse,
Et reperire Deum nisi qui pars ipse deorum est? *Manil.* lib. 2.

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1 Cor. ii. 14.

spiritual things are spiritually discerned, is the rule of a better master in wisdom than they; and beasts surely, because not endued with reason, have no conceptions concerning man's nature or the matters proper to him, (according to what rules, by what methods, to what purposes he doth act;) so in likelihood should we not be able to apprehend and discourse about things appertaining to God, his nature, the methods and reasons of his proceedings; the notions of eternal truth, the indispensable laws of right, the natural differences of good and evil, with such like high objects of thought, except our souls had in them some sparks of Divine understanding; some cognation with, and communication from, Heaven.

I shall to these only subjoin one further consideration worth attending to; that the wisest and most considerate men, in several times, only by reflecting upon their own minds, and observing in them what was most lovely and excellent, most pure and straight, have fallen upon, and conspired in, notions concerning God, very suitable to those which we believe taught us by revelation; although contrary to the prejudices of their education, and to popular conceits: many admirable passages to this purpose we may find dropped from the mouth of Socrates and the pen of Plato; in Cicero, in Epictetus, yea, in the least credulous or fanciful of men, Aristotle himself. Whence plainly enough we may collect how near affinity there is between God and us; how legible characters of the Divinity are written upon our souls; how easily we may know God, if we be not ignorant of ourselves; that we need not go far to fetch arguments to prove that God is, nor to find

lessons to learn what he is; since we always carry both about us, or rather within us; since our souls could indeed come from no other than such a Being, whom they so resemble and represent. SERM. VII.

I have indulged my thoughts somewhat freely in this speculation, yet I hope not altogether impertinently, for that (as I before alleged) in the chief of God's works (observable by us) we may reasonably suppose that his glory doth chiefly shine; and will therefore be most discernible to us, if we open our eyes and apply our minds thereto.

II. Thus doth human nature, being in each singular man, shew the existence of God, as its original author and pattern; considering also men as related and combined together in society, some glimpse of a Divine power and wisdom ordering them toward it, and preserving them in it, may be perceived. As in the world natural, the parts thereof are so fitted in varieties of size, of quality, of aptitude to motion, that all may stick together, (excluding chasms and vacuities,) and all cooperate incessantly to the preservation of that common union and harmony which was there intended; so in the world political we may observe various propensions and aptitudes disposing men to collection and coherence and cooperation in society. They are apt to flock together, not only from a kind of necessity, discovered by reason, for mutual help and defence; but from a natural love to company and conversation, with an aptness to delight therein, and from an inbred aversation to that solitude, wherein many great appetites natural to man must needs be stifled. They are also marvellously fitted to maintain intercourse not only by the principal guide thereof, reason, but by that great in-

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strument of it, speech; whereby men impart, and, as it were, transfuse into one another, their inmost thoughts; which faculty doth evidently relate unto, and plainly shews men naturally designed for, society. In order thereto, men are also endued with several subordinate inclinations and qualifications (arising from different temper of body, or disposition of mind) requisite to cement society, and preserve it for a competent durance in peace and order; some few being made very sagacious and provident, and thence fit to direct others; very quick and active, thence able to execute; others of a high spirit and courage, thence affecting and disposed to command; most others being dull in conceit, or heavy of temper, or of a soft spirit, and thence apt to follow, content to rest in mean state, willing to obey. All these things being so ordered, that even contrarieties of humour in men do serve to settle them in their due place and posture; to beget and preserve a peaceful union, and a decent harmony of action in society; which, supposing all men in ability and inclination more like or equal, (able to do, apt to affect the same things,) could hardly be; for then all men would be competitors and strugglers for the same thing, and so none would easily obtain or peacefully enjoy it.

Now since it is plainly best for man to live thus in society, many great benefits thence accruing to him, (security to his life, safe enjoying the fruits of his industry, much ease by mutual assistance, much delight in conversation; all that civil people enjoy of convenience beyond barbarians and savages, or indeed above beasts,) that men are so disposed and suited thereto, is an argument of mighty wisdom and

great goodness in that cause from whence all this proceeded; and such a cause is God. SERM. VII.

Thus from the constitution of societies we may collect a provident care over human affairs; the same also may be reasonably deduced from the preservation of them; for although man be inclined unto and fitted for society, yet being an agent very free and loose in his action, (acting contingently, and without necessary subjection to any settled law or rule, as do other things in nature,) no ordinary banks will constantly retain him in due place and order; so that the course of affairs, perverted by some men's irregular wills and passions, would run into great confusion, did not a wise care also continually govern things, seasonably interposing its hand, and thereby upholding, retaining, establishing them in order, or reducing them thereinto; did not a superintendent power restrain the fierceness of tyrants, the ambition of grandees, the greediness of oppressors, the wildness and precipitancy of factious multitudes; did not God sometime *break the arm of the wicked;* or, as Job speaks, *pour contempt upon princes,* and *weaken the strength of the mighty;* if he, that *stilleth the noise of the seas,* did not also *repress the tumults of the people.* Indeed, as in nature it is wisely provided that tigers, wolves, and foxes upon the earth, that kites in the air, and sharks in the sea, shall not so multiply and abound, but that many tame and gentle creatures shall abide there by them; so among men, that (among divers fierce, ravenous, crafty, and mischievous men) so many poor, simple, and harmless people do make a shift to live here in competent safety, liberty, ease, and comfort, doth argue his especial overwatching care and governance, who (as

Ps. xxxvii. 17. x. 15. Job xii. 21. xxxviii. 15. Ps. cvii. 40. lxxv. 7.

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we are, in conformity to experience, taught by sacred scripture) hath an especial regard unto the poor and unto the meek; providing for them, and protecting them.

Psal. cxlvi. 7. cvii. 41. ix. 9. x. 14. xxxvii. 18.

I might subjoin those significations of Providence, which the general connection of mankind doth afford; things being so ordered, that several nations and societies shall be prompted, by need or by advantage mutual, to maintain correspondence and commerce with each other; under common laws and compacts, that so there should become a kind of union and harmony even among the several parts and elements, as it were, of the human world. I might consider the benefit that arises (as in the natural world from contrary qualities and motions, so) in the human world even from wars and contentions; how these rouse men from sloth, brush away divers vices, ferment and purge things into a better condition: but I will not strive to be so minute and subtile.

Here I shall conclude these sorts of argumentation, inferring the existence of God from the common effects obvious to our sense and experience, either in the greater world of nature, or lesser world of man; by which God doth continually, in a still, though very audible voice, whisper this great truth into our ears. There be other sort of effects, more rare and extraordinary, which go above or against both those streams of natural and human things, whereby God doth more loudly, as it were, and expressly proclaim his being and providence; the consideration of which I shall reserve to another time.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words, which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted

inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I Believe in God,

SERMON VIII.

THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM UNIVERSAL CONSENT.

PSALM xix. 3, 4.

There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard: their line (or rather, according to the * LXX, their voice) *is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*

* Who read קולם instead of קום.

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THE Psalmist doth in this place observe and affirm (very plainly) the universality of religion; that all nations did conspire in acknowledging a Divinity, and ascribing thereto the framing and conservation of the heavens. He supposes the heavens to speak an universal language, heard and understood by all people, therein glorifying God and declaring him their Maker.

Upon which supposition I purpose now to ground an argument, to prove (that which formerly by several other kinds of discourse I have endeavoured to evince) that great fundamental truth concerning the existence of God, that is, of one incomprehensibly excellent Being, the Maker and Governor of all things.

The argument (to be short) is that (as Lactantius speaks) * *universal and unanimous testimony of people and nations*, through all courses of time, *who* (otherwise differing in language, custom, and conceit) *only have agreed in this one matter of opinion.* This testimony, in itself simply taken, hath indeed (according to the rules of reason and judgments of wise men, no small force; but seems to have much greater, if we consider the source, whatever that could be, whence it was derived. As to the thing absolutely taken, Aristotle thus ranks the degrees of probability: what seems true to some wise men is somewhat probable; what seems to the most or to all wise men, is very probable; what most men, both wise and unwise, assent unto, doth still more resemble truth; but what men generally consent in hath the highest probability, and approaches near to demonstrable truth; so near, that it may pass for ridiculous arrogance and self-conceitedness, or for intolerable obstinacy and perverseness, to deny it. *A man*, saith the philosopher, *may assume what seems true to the wise, if it do not contradict the common opinion of men*; no man's wisdom (he supposes) sufficient to balance the general authority of men. Indeed, when extravagant wits, and pretenders to wisdom, (or to an extraordinary reach in knowledge,) shall assert things evidently repugnant to sense or reason; that snow and coal have the like appearance, (as did Anaxagoras;) that all motion is impossible, (as Zeno;) that contradictory propositions may be consistent, (as Heraclitus;) we may add to those instances, that all things in nature proceeded from chance, (as Epicurus and his followers;) what other means have we (since no principles can be more evi-

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* Testimoninm populorum atque gentium in una hac re non diffidentium. *Lact.* i. 2.

Θείη δ' ἂν τις τὸ ἐνδοξῶν τοῖς σοφοῖς, ἐὰν μὴ ἐναντίον ταῖς τῶν πολλῶν δόξαις ᾖ Top. i. 8.

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dent than such propositions as they reject) to confute them, or to decide the cause, than making appeal to the common sentiments of mankind? which if they decline, what have we more to do than to laugh at or pity them? however, surely, he needs to have a very strong and very clear reason to shew, who dares to withstand the common suffrage of mankind, and to challenge all the world of mistake. Now somewhat to enforce this discourse; but more to evidence the matter of fact upon which it is grounded, and withal to make good that confirmation thereof, which was intimated; I shall allege some few testimonies of ancient philosophers, (that is, of witnesses in this cause most impartial and unsuspected,) selected out of innumerable others extant and obvious, serving to the same purpose: *We are wont to attribute much*, saith Seneca, *to what all men presume; it is an argument with us of truth, that any thing seems true to all; as that there be Gods we hence collect, for that all men have engrafted in them an opinion concerning Gods; neither is there any nation so void of laws, or good manners, that it doth not believe there are some Gods*[a]; so doth he assert the matter of fact, and argue from it. The like doth Cicero in many places, sometimes in the person of his dialogists, sometimes according to his own sense; pressing this argument as very weighty. *This*, saith he, in his Tusculan Questions, *seems a most firm thing, which is alleged, why we should believe Gods*

[a] Multum dare solemus præsumptioni omnium hominum, apud nos veritatis argumentum est aliquid omnibus videri; tanquam Deos esse sic colligimus, quod omnibus de Diis opinio insita est; nec ulla gens usquam est adeo extra leges moresque] projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat. *Sen. Epist.* cxvii. *vid. de Benef.* iv. 4.

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to be, because no nation is so fierce, no man so wild, whose mind an opinion concerning Gods hath not imbued: many think amiss concerning Gods, for that uses to proceed from bad custom, but all do however conceive a Divine power and nature to exist—Now in all things the consent of all nations is to be supposed a law of nature[b]. We shall have other occasion to cite divers places out of Plato and Aristotle, confirming the same thing; I shall now only add these pregnant words of Maximus Tyrius: *In such a quarrelling, and tumult, and jangling,* (about other matters of opinion,) *you may see this one by common accord acknowledged law and speech, that there is one God, the King and Father of all; and many gods, the children of God, and ruling together with him: this the Greek says, and this the Barbarian says; the inhabiter of the continent, and the islander; the wise and the unwise do say the same*[c].

Thus it appears, by testimony abundantly sufficient, (to which also all histories ancient and modern do agree,) that our conclusion hath been the catholic and current doctrine of all times and of all places;

[b] Firmissimum hoc afferri videtur cur Deos esse credamus, quod nulla gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam sit immanis, cujus mentem non imbuerit Deorum opinio. Multi de Diis prava sentiunt, (id enim vitioso more effici solet;) omnes tamen esse vim, et naturam divinam arbitrantur.—Omni autem in re consensio omnium gentium lex naturæ putanda est. *Tusc.* i. p. 299. Vid. de Nat. Deor. i. pag. 22. et ii. pag. 53, 57, &c.

[c] Ἐν τοσούτῳ δὲ πολέμῳ καὶ στάσει καὶ διαφωνίᾳ ἕνα ἴδοις ἂν ἐν πάσῃ γῇ ὁμόφωνον νόμον καὶ λόγον, ὅτι Θεὸς εἷς πάντων βασιλεὺς καὶ πατήρ· καὶ θεοὶ πολλοὶ, Θεοῦ παῖδες, συνάρχοντες Θεῷ, ταῦτα δὲ ὁ Ἕλλην λέγει, καὶ ὁ Βάρβαρος λέγει, καὶ ὁ ἠπειρώτης, καὶ ὁ θαλάττιος, καὶ ὁ σοφὸς, καὶ ὁ ἄσοφος. Diss. i. p. 5.

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so that who denies assent thereto, is beyond measure paradoxical, and belongs to a sect very thin and weak; is in opinion *what a monster is in nature*, a thing extraordinary and uncouth; *as a lion without courage, an ox without horns, a bird without wings*, (as the philosopher speaks;) a thing which seldom haps to be, and that never without some great error or defect [d].

But if, as surely he will, our haughty adversary shall refuse the verdict of this grand jury, we may assert its authority, not only as competent in itself, but as more considerable in respect to the causes whence it proceeded, or from the manner by which this general consent can be conceived to have been produced and propagated among men. That men should thus conspire in opinion must needs proceed either, 1. from hence, that such an opinion was by way of natural light or instinct (as the first most evident principles of science are conceived to be, or as the most effectual propensions toward good are) implanted in man's nature; thus Cicero and other philosophers suppose it to have come: in him it is thus said, and argued: *Since not by any institution, or custom, or law, this opinion is established, and among all, without exception, a firm consent doth abide, it is necessary there should be Gods; we having implanted, or rather inbred, notions concerning them; but about whatever men naturally*

[d] Εἰ δὲ ἐξεγένοντο ἐν τῷ ξύμπαντι αἰῶνι δύο που καὶ τρεῖς ἄθεοι καὶ ταπεινὸν καὶ ἀσθενὲς γένος· ὡς ἄθυμος λέων, ὡς βοῦς ἄκερος, ὡς ὄρνις ἄπτερος. Id, 16.

Καί τις οὐκ ἂν ἐπήνεσε τὴν τῶν βαρβάρων σοφίαν, εἴγε μηδεὶς αὐτῶν εἰς ἀθεότητα ἐξέπεσε, μηδὲ ἀμφιβάλλουσι περὶ θεῶν, ἆρα γε εἰσὶν, ἢ οὐκ εἰσὶν, καὶ ἆρα γε ἡμῶν φροντίζουσι, ἢ οὐ, &c. Ælian. Var. ii. 31.

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o agree, that must needs be true: we must there-re confess there are Gods[e]. Thus doth he draw is opinion from original light of nature. Or, 2. it ay come from a common inclination in man's soul aturally disposing every man to entertain this opin-n, whenever it is propounded, as there is in our es a natural readiness to perceive the light, when-er it shines before us; thus others explain the se thereof, as Julian particularly: *We all,* saith he, *ithout being taught,* (without any painful or long struction,) *are persuaded, that a Divinity exists; nd to regard it, and to have, we may suppose, speedy tendency* (or recourse) *thereto; being in ich manner disposed thereto in our souls, as ings endued with the faculty of seeing are to the ght*[f]: the same similitude is, as I remember, used r Plato to the same purpose. Or, 3. it may come ence, that some very prevalent reason (obvious to l men, even to the most rude and barbarous, and owing from common principles or notions of truth) d beget this agreement in them: thus Plutarch de-ves it from men's common observation of the stars' nstant order and motion; so St. Paul also seems imply the knowledge of God manifest to all men om the creation of the world, and the works of od visible therein; and here (in this 19th Psalm)

Plut. de Plac. i. 6.

Rom. i. 19, 20.

[e] Cum enim non instituto aliquo, aut more, aut lege sit opinio nstituta, maneatque ad unum omnium firma consensio, intelligi cesse est esse Deos, quoniam insitas eorum, vel potius innatas gnitiones habemus; de quo autem omnium natura consentit, verum esse necesse est. Esse igitur Deos confitendum est. *e Nat. Deor.* i. pag. 22. *vid.* ii. *de Nat. Deor.* 53, 57, &c.

[f] Πάντες ἀδιδάκτως εἶναι θεῖόν τι πεπείσμεθα, καὶ πρὸς τοῦτο ἀφορᾶν, ἐπ' τό τε, οἶμαι, σπεύδειν· οὕτω διατιθέμενοι τὰς ψυχὰς πρὸς αὐτὸ, ὥσπερ αι πρὸς τὸ φῶς τὰ βλέποντα. Jul. ad Heraclitum.

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the prophet may seem to intend the same, although it be not certain he does; for that general acknowledgment and glorifying of God as maker of the heavens, which he avouches, may be understood as well the consequence as the cause of this religious opinion. Or, 4. it might from some common fountain of instruction (from one ancient master, or one primitive tradition) be conveyed, as from one common head or source, into many particular conduits. Thus the author of the book *de Mundo* (dedicated to Alexander) seems to deduce it: *It is an ancient saying*, says he, *and running in the race of all men, that from God all things, and by God all things were constituted, and do consist* [g]. The like Aristotle himself implies in a notable place, which we shall afterward have occasion to produce.

Metaph. xii. 8.

No other way beside one of these can we (following experience or reason) imagine, by which any opinion or practice should prevail generally among men, who otherwise are so apt to differ and dissent in judgment about things. And be it any one or more of these ways that this opinion became so universally instilled into men's minds, our argument will thereby gain weight and force: if we assign or acknowledge any of the two first ways, we do in effect yield the question; and grant it unreasonable to deny our conclusion: if nature forcibly drives men, or strongly draws men into this persuasion, (nature, which always we find in her notions and in her instincts very sincere and faithful, not only to ourselves, but to all other creatures,) how vain an extravagancy will it then be to oppose it? also, if we

[g] Ἀρχαῖος μὲν οὖν τις λόγος, καὶ πάτριός ἐστι πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὡς ἐκ Θεοῦ τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ Θεοῦ ἡμῖν συνέστηκεν. Cap. 6.

rant that plain reason, apparent to the generality SERM. VIII.
men, hath moved them to consent herein, do we
ot therefore, by dissenting from it, renounce com-
on sense, and confess ourselves unreasonable? but
we say, that it did arise in the last manner, from
common instruction or primitive tradition, (as in-
ed, to my seeming, from that chiefly, assisted by
od reason, it most probably did arise,) we shall
ereby be driven to inquire, who that common mas-
r, or the author of such tradition was; of any such
e find no name recorded, (as we do of them, who
ve by plausible reasons or artifices drawn whole
tions and sects of people to a belief of their doc-
ine;) we find no time when, no place where, no
anner how it began to grow or spread, as in other
ses hath been wont to appear; what then can we
herwise reasonably deem, than that the first deli-
rers and teachers thereof were none other, than
e first parents of mankind itself, who, as they
uld not be ignorant of their own original, so could
ot but take care by ordinary education to convey
e knowledge thereof to their children; whence it
ust needs insensibly spread itself over all posteri-
es of men, being sucked in with their milk, being
ught them together with their first rudiments of
eech? Thus doth that consideration lead us to
nother, very advantageous to our purpose; that
ankind hath proceeded from one common stock of
e man or a few men gathered together; which
th upon a double score confirm our assertion: first,
proving the generations of men had a beginning;
condly, as affording us their most weighty author-
y for the doctrine we assert. For, 1. supposing
ankind had a beginning upon this earth, whence

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could it proceed but from such a Being as we assert? who but such an one (so wise, powerful, and good) could or would form these bodies of ours so full of wonderful artifice? who should infuse those divine endowments (not only of life and sense, but) of understanding and reason? Aristotle, discoursing about the generation of animals, says, *If man* (or any other perfect animal) *were* γηγενὴς, *he must be necessarily produced, either as out of a worm, or as from an egg;* but is it not ridiculous to suppose him to arise in either of those manners? did we, did ever any one in any age observe any such production of a man? yet, why if once it could be, should it not happen sometime, yea often again, in some part of the earth, in so many thousand years? what peculiar lucky temper of slime can we imagine to have been then, which not at sometime afterward, not somewhere, should appear again? Experience sufficiently declares, that more is required to so noble a production, that men no otherwise come into the world, than either from another man, (fitted in a manner curious above our conception with many organs most exquisitely suited to that purpose,) or immediately from a cause incomprehensibly great and wise. And could we without fondness conceive man's body possibly might arise (like mice, as Diodorus Siculus tells us, out of the mud of Nilus) from earth and water fermented together, and organized by the sun's heat; yet (as more largely we have discoursed at another time) we cannot however well suppose his soul, that principle of operations so excellent, (so much different from, so far elevated above all material motions,) to spring up from dirty stuff, however baked or boiled by heat. I ask also, (sup-

De Gener. Anim. iii. cap. ult. Stoici putant homines in omnibus terris et agris generatos tanquam fungos. *Lact.* vii. 4. Vid. Lips. Phys. Stoic. iii. 3.

posing still this notion derived from the first men,) 2. who instilled even this notion into them? why they should conceive themselves to come from God, if they did not find it so; if he that made them did not sensibly discover himself to them, and shew them, that to him they owed their being? In short, if they did testify and teach their posterity, that they came from God, we can have no reason to disbelieve them; nor can imagine more credible witnesses, or more reasonable instructors than themselves concerning their own original: it is a discourse, this, which we find even in Plato: *We must,* saith he, *yield credence to them, who first avouched themselves the offspring of God, and did sure clearly know their own progenitors; it is indeed impossible to distrust the children of the Gods, although otherwise speaking without plausible or necessary demonstrations; but, following law, we must believe them, as testifying about matters peculiarly belonging to themselves*[h].

Thus do these two notions, that of general tradition concerning God, and that concerning man's origin upon earth from one stock, mutually support and defend each other[i]. And indeed, concerning the latter, there be divers other arguments of the same kind, although perhaps hardly any so clear and va-

[h] Πειστέον τοῖς εἰρηκόσιν ἔμπροσθεν, ἐκγόνοις μὲν θεῶν οὖσιν, ὡς ἔφασαν, σαφῶς δέ που τοὺς αὑτῶν προγόνους εἰδόσιν· ἀδύνατον οὖν θεῶν παισὶν ἀπιστεῖν, καίπερ ἄνευ τι εἰκότων καὶ ἀναγκαίων ἀποδείξεων λέγουσιν, ἀλλ' ὡς οἰκεῖα φάσκουσιν ἀπαγγέλλειν, ἑπομένους τῷ νόμῳ πιστευτέον. Tim. p. 1053.

[i] —— quæ si singula vos forte non movent, universa certe inter se connexa, atque conjuncta movere debebunt. *Cic. de Nat.*

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lid, confirming it; I mean divers common opinions, stories, and practices, of an unaccountable rise, which cannot be well deemed to have been introduced, and so universally diffused among men, otherwise than from this fountain. I think it worth the while to propound some instances thereof, of each kind.

Vid. Clem. Alex. Str. v. p. 401.

Even this opinion, or story itself, concerning mankind proceeding from one single or very narrow stock, was commonly received, and that from this head of tradition; as also divers other concerning the nature and state of man. That God did form man and breathe his soul into him, (as Aratus says, that *we are God's offspring*, and, as Cicero speaks, that *we have our souls drawn and dropped from the Divine nature*,) might be shewn by innumerable testimonies to have been a general opinion; which although it have a very strong foundation in reason, yet it seems rather to have obtained by virtue of tradition.

A natura divina haustos animos et delibutos habemus. *Cic. Divin.* 1.

[k]That man was formed after the image of God, and doth much resemble him, was also a general opinion, as Aristotle himself observes; and Ovid most expressly, according to what he found set down in ancient stories.

Finxit ad effigiem.

That man's soul is immortal, and destined to a future state of life, in joy or pain respectively, according to his merits or demerits in this life; that there should accordingly pass severe scrutinies and judgments after death upon the actions of this life; that there were places provided of rest and pleasure

Clem. Str. v. p. 442.

[k] Ἀνθρωποειδεῖς θεοὺς, &c. Metaph. xii. 8.

Ὥσπερ δὲ πάντες καὶ τὰ εἴδη ἑαυτοῖς ἀφομοιοῦσι, οὕτω καὶ τοὺς βίους τῶν θεῶν. Polit. i. 1.

for good men, of horror and misery for bad men departed; were opinions that did commonly possess men's minds; none of them, it seems, upon the force of any arguments having a common influence upon men's minds, (such as philosophers did by speculation invent, being indeed too subtile for vulgar capacities to apprehend, and scarce able to persuade themselves,) but rather from their education, continued through all times, and commencing from that head we speak of; as even such philosophers themselves confess: *We must*, says Plato, *believe the reports of this kind*, (speaking about these matters,) *being so many, and so very ancient*[l]: and, *We suppose*, saith Cicero, *that souls abide after death from the consent of all nations*[m]. And, *I cannot*, saith he again, *assent unto those, who have lately begun to discourse, that souls do perish together with bodies, and that all things are blotted out by death: the authority of the ancients doth more prevail with me*[n]. And, *When*, saith Seneca, *we dispute concerning the eternity of souls, the consent of men either fearing or worshipping the Inferi* (that is, the state of things after death) *hath no slight moment with us*[o]. Even Celsus himself (an Epicurean philosopher, and great enemy of our faith) confesses, SERM. VIII.

[l] Πιστεύειν δὲ ταῖς ἄλλαις φήμαις χρεὼν περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα, οὕτω πολλαῖς καὶ σφόδρα παλαιαῖς οὔσαις. Plat. de Leg. 2. Vid. Gorg. sub fin.

[m] Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium, *Cic. Tusc.* 1.

[n] Neque enim assentior iis, qui hæc nuper disserere cœperunt cum corporibus simul animas interire, atque omnia morte deleri; plus apud me antiquitas valet, &c. *Cic. Læl.*

[o] Cum de animarum æternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timentium inferos, aut colentium. *Sen. Ep.* 117.

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that *divine men had delivered it, that happy souls should enjoy a happy life hereafter*[p].

The opinion concerning man having sometimes been in a better state, (both in regard to complexion of mind, and outward accommodations of life,) but that he did by his wilful miscarriages fall thence into this wretched condition of proneness to sin, and subjection to sorrow, was an ancient doctrine, (if we take Plato's word;) and concerning it Cicero hath these remarkable words: *From which errors and miseries of human life we may*, saith he, *conclude, that sometime those ancient prophets, or interpreters of the Divine mind in the delivery of holy mysteries, who have said, that we are born to undergo punishments for the faults committed in a former life, may seem to have understood somewhat*[q].—(It is true, these authors assign this fall to the souls of singular persons in a state of preexistence; but it is plain enough, how easy it might be so to mistake and transform the story.) To the same head may be referred that current story concerning the golden age, in which men first did live so happily without care and pain; which so livelily expresses man's condition in paradise. As also thereto may belong that relation concerning man's being thrown into this miserable state, because of a rapine committed against God's will, and that by the means of a woman sent

Παλαιός τις λόγος. Phæd.

[p] Ἱστόρηται θείοις ἀνδράσι εὐδαίμων βίος ψυχαῖς εὐδαίμοσι. Celsus apud Orig. pag. 350.

[q] Ex quibus humanæ vitæ erroribus atque ærumnis fit, ut interdum veteres illi vates, sive in sacris initiisque tradendis divinæ mentis interpretes, qui nos ob scelera suscepta in vita superiore pœnarum luendarum causa natos esse dixerunt, aliquid vidisse videantur, &c. *Cic. Fragm.* pag. 79.

down; who *with her hands opened the lid of a great vessel,* (fraught with mischiefs,) *and thence dispersed sad disasters and sorrows among men;* as Hesiod expresseth it, in words very applicable to the fact of our mother Eve, and the event following it[r]. SERM. VIII.

I do not know also whether what Plato says concerning man's being at first ἀνδρόγυνος, (of both sexes,) and being afterward cleaved into two, was borrowed from tradition, or devised from his own fancy; it surely well comports with the sacred history concerning woman being taken out of man. That there are two prime causes, or principles, one of good things, the other of bad, was the ancient doctrine among all the ancient nations; of the Persians, (who called one of them Oromasdes, the other Arimanius;) of the Egyptians, (who had their Osiris and Typhon;) of the Chaldeans, (who had their good and bad planets;) of the Greeks, (who had their good and bad dæmon, their Ζεὺς and Ἅδης;) we have reported by Plutarch in his tract *De Iside et Osiride,* by Laertius in his Proœme, and others, (*Aug. de Civ. Dei,* v. 21.) which conceits seem derived from the ancient traditions concerning *God* the author of all good, and *Sathan* the tempter to all evil, and the minister of Divine vengeance; (Plutarch expressly says the good principle was called *God,* the bad one, *Dæmon.*) Indeed there were many other relations concerning matters of fact, or pieces of ancient story, agreeing with the sacred writings, which did among In Phædr.

[r] Primi mortalium, quique ex his geniti naturam incorrupti sequebantur, &c. *Sen. Ep.* 90.

——χείρεσσι πίθου μέγα πῶμ' ἀφελοῦσα
Ἐσκέδασ', ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἐμήσατο κήδεα λυγρά. Hes. Ἔργ.

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the ancient people pass commonly, although somewhat disguised by alterations incident from time and other causes; which seem best derivable from this common fountain: such as that concerning the sons of God, and heroes dwelling on the earth; concerning men of old time exceeding those of following times in length of life, in stature, in strength of body, whereof in ancient poets there is so much mention; concerning men's conspiring in rebellion against God, affecting and attempting to climb heaven; concerning mankind being overwhelmed and destroyed by an universal deluge, and that by Divine justice, because of cruelty and oppression (with other enormous vices) generally reigning:

—Qua terra patet, fera regnat Erinnys,
In facinus jurasse putes: dent ocyus omnes
Quas meruere pati (sic stat sententia) pœnas.

All over the earth, fierce rage doth reign; you would take them to have sworn to do mischief; let them all immediately undergo the pains which they have deserved; this is my resolution: so God, in Ovid's style, declared the reason why he decreed to bring that sore calamity upon mankind: I might add that prophecy, commonly known, that this world shall finally perish by a general conflagration.

Clem. Str. v. p. 442.

These opinions and stories chiefly concern man; there were divers others concerning God and religion, sprouting probably from the same root. That Divine goodness was the pure motive of God's making the world, seems to have been a tradition; implied by their saying, that *Love was the first, and the chief of the Gods:* πρώτιστον μὲν Ἔρωτα θεῶν μηδίσατο πάντων, said Parmenides; and, Ἠδ' Ἔρος, ὃς πάτεσσι μεταπρέπει ἀθανάτοισι, said Hesiod. That God

Arist. Metaph. i. 4.

de the world out of a chaos, or confused heap of tter; which is so plainly expressed in Hesiod, in id, and in other ancient writers. That God did ke or beget inferior insensible powers, (of great lerstanding and ability; whom they called gods, l the children of the sovereign God;) whom God mediately did converse with, and in royal man- did govern; whom he did employ as spies and nts in providential administrations of human af- s; who did frequently appear unto, and fami- ly converse with men; who do walk up and vn the earth, observing men's actions; secretly isting and comforting good men, restraining and ssing and punishing the bad; whereof we have many instances in Homer, in Hesiod, and in other ient writers; shewing as to those matters the ge- al conceits of the old world. That God's espe- l presence and residence was above, in heaven, istotle expressly tells us was the belief of all men; *l men*, saith he, *have an opinion concerning Gods, l all men assign the highest place to the Gods, h Greeks and Barbarians* [r]. SERM. VIII. Arist. Pol. i. 1.

That God's providence did extend itself to all ticularities of affairs; and that all things were lered by him; he constantly exercising both be- nity and justice suitably to the deserts and needs men; encouraging and assisting; blessing and varding virtuous and pious men; relieving the tressed and helpless; controlling and chastising h as were outrageously unjust or impious. That d at seasons used to declare his mind to men (his probation or displeasure in regard to their doings) That God doth know all the actions, words, and inward thoughts of men. *Vid. Cl. Str.* 5.

[r] Πάντες γὰρ ἄνθρωποι περὶ θεῶν ἔχουσιν ὑπόληψιν, καὶ πάντες τὸν ἀνωτ τῷ θείῳ τόπων ἀποδιδόασι καὶ Βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες. De Cœlo, i. 3.

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by accidents preternatural or prodigious; did presignify future events; did impart foreknowledge of them in several ways; by dreams, by visions, by inspirations, &c. To these opinions were answerable divers common practices: invocating Divine help in need; consulting God by oracle in case of ignorance or doubt; deprecating Divine vengeance; making acknowledgments to God in hymns and praises; returning oblations for benefits received, both common and special; expiating guilt, and appeasing God's wrath by purgations and by sacrifices, (a practice peculiarly unlikely to proceed from any other reason than institution;) fortifying testimonies and promises by oath, or appeal to Divine knowledge and justice; invoking (upon condition) God's judgments upon themselves or others, what is called cursing; appointing priests for God's service, and yielding them extraordinary respect; consecrating temples and altars; making vows, and dedicating gifts; celebrating festivals; paying tithes (that very determinate part) of the fruits of the earth, of the spoils in war, of the gains in trade, by way of acknowledgment and thankfulness to the Donor and Disposer of all things: in which, and the like opinions and performances, (which it would be a long business particularly to insist on,) men's general concurrence doth fairly argue, that their religion did peculiarly result from one simple institution common to mankind.

That there will be a future judgment, and rewards suited to the practices of men in this life. *Vid. Cl. Strom.* v. p. 442.

To these we might adjoin divers civil customs, wherein most nations did, from this cause probably, conspire: for instance, their counting by decades, or stopping at ten in their numerical computations; which Aristotle says, all men, both Barbarians and Greeks, did use, noting, that so common an agree-

nent could not arise from chance, but from nature[s]; SERM. VIII.
ut it is much more plausible to assign its rise to
radition. Their having every where anciently the
ame number of letters, and the same names (or
ittle varied) of them. Their dividing time into
veeks, (or systems of seven days;) of which prac-
ice to have been general there be many plain testi-
nonies. Their beginning the νυχθήμερον (or account
of the daily revolution of the heavens) from the
night, grounded probably upon the report that night
did precede day; as Hesiod phraseth it, that *night did beget day*[t]. Their general abhorrence of incest-
uous copulations; of which there is indeed some
ground in nature, but none, I suppose, so very clear
or discernible, as might serve alone to produce such
a consent; yea, perhaps, if one consider it, the
whole business concerning matrimony will seem
drawn from the head we discourse of. Their great
care of funerals, and decently interring the dead;
which Cicero indeed deduces as a consequence upon In Læl.
their belief of the soul's immortality. In fine, the
consent of the old world in all moral notions of mo-
ment doth (to my sense) much imply the same
thing; which notions although natural reason well
used might suggest to all men, yet men, it seems,
were never so generally disposed to reason well, as
thereby alone to discern and approve unanimously
the same truths; especially truths of this nature;

[s] Πάντες ἄνθρωποι καὶ Βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες εἰς τὰ δέκα καταριθμοῦσι— οὐ γὰρ δὲ ἀπὸ τύχης γε αὐτὸ ποιοῦντες φαίνονται, καὶ ἀεί· τὸ δὲ ἀεὶ καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων οὐκ ἀπὸ τύχης, ἀλλὰ φυσικόν. Arist. Probl. xv. 3.

[t] Νυκτὸς δ' αὖτ' αἰθήρ τε καὶ ἡμέρη ἐξεγένοντο. Hesiod. Theog.

—dies natales, et mensium, et annorum initia sic observant, ut noctem dies subsequatur. *Cæs. de Gal.* l. 6.

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which many men are apt to dislike, (as repugnant to their desires,) and consequently not ready to believe; which yet might easily by education be infused into their minds, and, by virtue of the prejudice thereby begot, (assisted by plausible reason and popular consent,) be preserved and rooted in them.

Now these (with divers more, perhaps, which they who are curiously inquisitive might observe) common persuasions (whether concerning matters of universal truth, or of particular facts) and those common usages having little or nothing of foundation apparent in man's nature, or in the clear reason of the thing, no prevailing appetite or inclination of man's soul prompting to them, no occasion commonly incident to human affairs being apt to suggest them, (at least divers of them; there being indeed rather an aptitude in men to disapprove and resist them, as cross to their dispositions,) we cannot reasonably deduce them from any other cause than such as we have assigned, men's being, as St. Paul speaks, *made of one blood*, and receiving, as their nature, so their principles of opinion and practice from the same common parents.

To confirm which discourse, and to prevent further objections against it, we may consider, that however perhaps among some very barbarous nations this principal tradition (together with others mentioned, attending thereon) may have been almost worn out by time and men's stupid negligence; that however also among some people, affecting semblances of singular wisdom, as among the Greeks, the matter thereof might fall under question, and some might doubt thereof, others contradict and deny it; yet most ancient histories (particularly that of Moses,

far most ancient of all, and therefore, even secluding its special and more sacred authority, of all most credible) do attest them to have been, in substance, universally received, running with a strong and clear current among the eastern people, (the Chaldeans, Phœnicians, and Egyptians;) who that they were the most ancient inhabiters of the earth, from whom the rest of mankind was propagated, the antiquity of empires among them, the first use of letters, the rise of arts, the greater progress in all kinds of civil culture, (which things argue a longer continuance in one place and state,) beside express records of story and visible monuments of things performed among them, do sufficiently declare; whose consent therefore doth in reason, so far as serves our purpose, involve the consent of all mankind; and doth confirm those notions to have flowed from the clear spring of our first parents their instruction. SERM. VIII.

It is also true, I must confess, that these original traditions, (concerning the being and providence of God,) as must necessarily happen not only by the malice of evil spirits, but from man's natural infirmity and proneness to change, even to the worse, (as also from men's aptness to mistake, from rude ignorance, from wantonness of fancy, from craftiness in promoting designs of ambition and covetousness by introducing novelties, and from such like causes,) did soon begin to be adulterated by many corrupt mixtures, did by degrees degenerate exceedingly into various shapes of superstition, falsehood, and futility. Yet even so was Judaism depraved by the Scribes; and Christianity itself hath been strangely debased by a long course of ignorant and bad times; yet who can doubt but both these were derived from one pure

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instruction; that of Moses, this of Christ our Lord? That it might so fare with the primitive traditions of religion is evident; that it really did so, we have even the judgment and assertion of Aristotle himself, in those remarkable words of his to this purpose: *There were*, saith he, *things conveyed traditionally by the primitive and ancient men, and left in a fabulous dress to their posterity; that there are these Gods, and that Divinity maintains* (or encompasses) *all nature: but other things were to these fictitiously superinduced for persuasion of the vulgar sort, and for the use of laws and public commodity: hence they speak of the Gods, as having a human shape, or resembling other living creatures, and other things consequent upon, or agreeable to, these sayings; from which things if we separate that only which was first delivered, that they deemed the Gods the first beings, we may suppose what they said divinely spoken. And it is according to probability, all art and philosophy being, as might possibly, often invented and lost again, that even these opinions of them have as relics been preserved until now: the opinion then of our fathers, and that which came from the first men, is only thus far manifest to us*[u].

[u] Παραδέδοται δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων καὶ παλαιῶν, ἐν μύθου σχήματι κατελελειμμένα τοῖς ὕστερον, ὅτι θεοί τέ εἰσιν οὗτοι, καὶ περιέχει τὸ θεῖον τὴν ὅλην φύσιν. τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ μυθικῶς ἤδη προσήχθαι πρὸς τὴν πειθὼ τῶν πολλῶν, καὶ πρὸς τὴν εἰς τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὸ συμφέρον χρῆσιν. ἀνθρωποειδεῖς τε γὰρ τούτους, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζώων ὁμοίους τισὶ λέγουσι, καὶ τούτοις ἕτερα ἀκόλουθα, καὶ παραπλήσια τοῖς εἰρημένοις· ὧν εἴ τις χωρίσας αὐτὸ λάβοι μόνον τὸ πρῶτον, ὅτι θεοὺς ᾠοντο τὰς πρώτας οὐσίας εἶναι, θεῖος ἂν εἰρῆσθαι νομίσειε. καὶ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς πολλάκις εὑρημένης εἰς τὸ δυνατὸν ἑκάστης καὶ τέχνης, καὶ φιλοσοφίας, καὶ πάλιν φθειρομένων· καὶ ταύτας τὰς δόξας ἐκείνων, οἷον λείψανα περισ-

Thus did the philosopher, with a sagacity worthy SERM.
o great a man, discern, that through that coarser VIII.
re, consisting in great part of dross and feculency,
taken from the fondness or fraud of human inven-
ion, or from diabolical suggestion,) a pure vein of
ruth did run, drawn from the source of primitive
radition; from which being supposed, we do infer,
vhat he acknowledges divinely said, that there doth
xist one first being or substance, incomprehensibly
xcellent in all perfection. The like observations
nd judgments might be produced out of divers other
vise men, (Plato, Cicero, and the like,) who ac-
nowledge and urge this common tradition as a good
rgument of the truths we maintain, as to the sub-
tance of them; yet scruple not to dissent from and
o reprehend the vulgar errors and bad customs
vhich had crept in and became annexed to them.
But let thus much suffice for this whole argument;
eing the last of those I intend to use for the proof
f that fundamental point, which is the root of all
eligion and piety.

I have produced several arguments to that purpose,
or rather several kinds of argument, each contain-
ng many subordinate ones,) most proper, I conceive,
nd apt to have a general efficacy upon men's minds,
n begetting and confirming a belief thereof. Each
f them have indeed, to my seeming, even singly
aken, a force irresistible; and the greatest in its
ind, that any such conclusion, not immediately ap-
arent to sense, is capable of. The existence of any
ne cause in natural philosophy, is not there demon-

ῶσθαι μέχρι τοῦ νῦν· ἡ μὲν οὖν πάτριος δόξα, καὶ ἡ παρὰ τῶν πρώτων ἐκεῖ κατεῦτον ἡμῖν φανερὰ μόνον. Arist. Metaphys. xii. 8.

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strable by effects in any proportion so many or various, so conspicuous or certain. No question can be determined by an authority so ample and comprehensive, so express and peremptory. No doctrine can to its confirmation allege so general, so constant, so uniform a tradition. No matter of fact can be assured by testimonies so many in number, so various in kind, so weighty in quality, as those, upon which this conclusion doth stand. And if we join together all these, in themselves so considerable and powerful forces, how can we be able to resist them? how can we dare to doubt of that, which they conspire to infer? When, I say, to the universal harmony of nature the common voice of nations doth yield its consent; when with the ordinary course of things, so many extraordinary accidents do concur in vote; when that which so many reasons prove, continual tradition also teaches; what can the result be, but firm persuasion in every wise and honest heart of the proposition so confirmed? except we can suppose, that, by a fatal conspiracy, all the appearances in nature, and all the generations of men; the highest reason, and the greatest authority imaginable, have combined to deceive us.

In the precedent Discourses I have endeavoured to prove the existence of God, by arguments, which do indeed more immediately evince those three principal attributes, wisdom, power, and goodness incomprehensible, but which also consequentially declare all other the attributes commonly esteemed ingredients of that notion, which answers to the name of God; (absolutely put, and without any adjunct limiting and diminishing it;) all those attributes, which Aristotle's definition, *The eternal most excellent living*

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thing[x], or that of Tertullian, *The supreme great thing*[y], do include or imply; namely, his *unity* first; then his *eternity* and indefectibility; his immense *omnipresence*, his *spirituality*; his *justice* and *veracity*; his *Sovereign Majesty* and authority; with the like connected to those, (for I cannot prosecute all the Divine perfections, according to that multiplicity of distinction, which our manner of conceit and expression is wont to assign.)

The uniformity, concord, and perfect harmony which appears in the constitution and conservation of things; their conspiring to one end, their continuing in the same order and course, do plainly declare the unity of God; even as the lasting peace of a commonwealth (composed of persons different in affections and humour) argues one law, that regulates and contains them; as the orderly march of an army shews it managed by one conduct; as the uniformity of a house, or of a town, declares it contrived by one architect.

And hereto also the common suffrage of mankind doth in a manner agree: for, however that they worshipped a multitude of inferior deities, yet that there was one Supreme God, Author and Governor of the rest, and of all things beside, transcending in power and wisdom, and all kind of perfection, was evidently the common opinion; whom therefore we see the poets (the best interpreters of the popular

[x] Φαμὲν δὲ τὸν Θεὸν εἶναι ζῶον ἀΐδιον ἄριστον. Arist. Metaph. xii. 7.

[y] Summum magnum, et forma, et ratione, et vi, et potestate. *Tert. adv. Marc.* i. 3.

Ἡ μακαρία φύσις· ἡ ἄφθονος ἀγαθότης· τὸ ἀγαπητὸν πᾶσι τοῖς λόγου μετειληφόσι τὸ πολυπόθητον κάλλος· ἡ ἀρχὴ τῶν ὄντων· ἡ πηγὴ τῆς ζωῆς· τὸ νοερὸν φῶς· ἡ ἀπρόσιτος σοφία. Bas. Hexaem. λογ. α'.

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opinions) do style the *Father of gods and men; the King of the gods; the most high, most great, most excellent, &c. The greater popularity,* as Tertullian speaks, *of mankind, even when idolatry obscured the sense of Divine providence, did however appropriate the name of God especially to one, in their usual expressions; being wont to say, If God grant;* and, *What pleases God;* and, *I commend it to God*[z]. And if the vulgar had in some measure this conceit, the wiser sort appear to have had more clear and full apprehensions and persuasions concerning it: Plato refers the making of the world to one whom he calls Πατέρα καὶ Ποιητὴν (*the Father and Maker of the universe.*) Aristotle, when he hath occasion to speak of God, doth usually speak in the singular; so do other philosophers, as the Stoics, in their famous precept *Deum sequi,* (to *follow God,* that is, to acquiesce in, or submit to, Divine providence,) sometime they do expressly signify this to be their opinion: *There are many popular gods,* said Antisthenes, *but one natural one:* εἷς δὲ ὢν πολυωνυμός ἐστι; *Being really one,* saith the author *de Mundo, he hath many names; according to the several affections he discovers, and the operations he exerts:* with whom Seneca thus agrees: *So often as you please, you may diversely name the Author of things: there may be so many appellations of him, as there be gifts or offices and operations: him our people fancy to be father Bacchus, and Hercules,*

"Τψιστος, μέγιστος, κράτιστος.

In Tim.

Cic. 1. de. N. D.

Arist. de Mund. cap. 7.

[z] Major popularitas generis humani—etiam tanta idololatria dominationem obumbrante, seorsum tamen illum, quasi proprio nomine Deum perhibent; et Deum Deorum; et si Deus dederit; et quod Deo placet; et Deo commendo. *Tertull. adv. Marc.* i. 10.

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and Mercury; call him also Nature, Fate, Fortune: all these are but names of the same God, variously using his power[a]. If they ever speak of Gods plurally, they are to be understood to speak with the like opinion of them, as we of angels, that is, of invisible, intelligent powers, created by the supreme God, dependent of him, subject to him[b]; Mars. Ficinus's caution concerning Plato being applicable to the rest:—*sed ne turbet quæso Deorum numerus, quem non turbat numerus angelorum. Nihil enim plus apud Platonem tot possunt Dii, quam apud nos tot angeli, totque beati.* So much for God's *unity*.

As to his *eternity*: if God made all things, he could not receive being from another; and he who made this world, what reason can there be to suppose him to be from another? Nor can any thing receive a being from itself, or from mere nothing spring up into being; therefore the Maker of the world must be eternal. Something of necessity must be eternal, otherwise nothing could have been at all; other things shew themselves to have proceeded from the wisdom, power, and goodness of One; whence that One is eternal; and so all nations have consented that God is.

That he is immortal and immutable doth also follow plainly: for he not depending for his being, or any

[a] Quoties voles, tibi licet aliter hunc auctorem rerum nostrarum compellare: tot appellationes ejus esse possunt, quot munera; hunc et Liberum patrem, et Herculem, ac Mercurium nostri putant; sic hunc Naturam voca, Fatum, Fortunam; omnia ejusdem Dei nomina sunt varie utentis sua potestate. *Sen. de Benef.* iv. 7.

[b] See that most remarkable saying of Sophocles, (*apud Grot. in Excerpt.* pag. 149.) εἷς ταῖς ἀληθείαισιν, εἷς ἐστιν θεὸς, &c. Mars. Fic. in Arg. lib. x. de Leg.

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thing thereto belonging, upon any other thing, neither can he depend for his continuance or conservation; having power superior to all things, as having conferred on them whatever of power they have, nothing can oppose him, or make any prevalent impression upon him, so as to destroy or alter any thing in him.

Also, from his making, his upholding, his governing all things, is consequent, that he was ever and is every where: where his power is, there his hand is; for every action with effect requires a conjunction of the agent and patient; nothing can act upon what is distant. That with his presence and power he doth penetrate all things, operating insensibly and imperceptibly, doth argue the spirituality of his being; and that he doth not consist of such matter (so extended, so divisible) as those things do, which we by sense perceive.

His overreaching wisdom implies him uncapable of being deceived; and his overbearing power signifies that he doth not need to deceive; and his transcendent goodness proves him unwilling to deceive: the like we may say of doing wrong; whence are consequent his perfect veracity and justice.

Lastly, the excellency of his nature, the eminency of his wisdom and power, the abundance of his goodness; as also, his having given being, then preserving it to all things, do infer his rightful title to supreme dominion; and accordingly, that all love, all obedience, all praise and veneration are due to him; according to the devout acknowledgment of those blessed elders: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and honour and power*, (or authority,) *because thou hast made all things; and for thy will they are and were created.*

Rev. iv. 11.

I Believe in God,

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THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM SUPERNATURAL EFFECTS.

JOHN v. 17.

But Jesus answered them, My Father hitherto worketh, and I work.

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WHEN at first by the Divine power this visible system of things was consummated and settled in that course wherein it now stands, it is said that *God rested from all his work which he had made:* Gen. ii. 2. the plain meaning of which saying is, that God had so framed all the parts of nature, and several kinds of things, and disposed them into such an order, and inserted into them such principles of action, that thereafter (without more than an ordinary conservation or concourse from him) things generally should continue in their being, station, and course, without any great change, for ever; that is, for so long as God had determined, or till their due period was run through[a]: (*He established them*, as the Psalmist speaks, *for ever and ever; he made a de-* Ps. cxlviii. 6.

[a] Ἔστιν δ' οὖν καταπεπαυκέναι τὸ τὴν τάξιν τῶν γενομένων εἰς πάντα χρόνον ἀπαραβάτως φυλάσσεσθαι τετάχεται, καὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς ἀταξίας ἕκαστον τῶν κτισμάτων καταπεπαυκέναι. Clem. Alex. Strom. vi. (pag. 4923.)

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cree, that shall not pass: His word was settled in the heavens, and his faithfulness unto all generations: they continue this day according to his ordinances: He made a covenant with day and night, and appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth:) thus God rested and ceased from his work of creation. But it is not said, nor intended, that God did absolutely give over or forbear working; that he withdrew his care, and tied up, as it were, his own hands by a resolution not to intermeddle more with any thing, but to enjoy a kind of Epicurean ease and ἀπραξία. No: his wisdom hath so ordered things, that there should be need and reason of his acting continually; that there should be frequent occasion of variously displaying his glorious attributes; of exercising his power, of demonstrating his goodness. Indeed, as to beings merely natural and unintelligent, there were no need of his doing more; for they are all thoroughly *his* obedient *servants*, and exactly fulfil his word; never straggling from the station in which he placed them; never transgressing the rule that he prescribed them: but he hath also made other beings, by nature uncapable of such uniformity and settlement; very free, and therefore very mutable; to the well governing of whom therefore a continual intention and activity is requisite. For the use and benefit of which beings, as a great part of nature was designed and made by God, so it was not unmeet, that for their sake he should sometime alter the course of nature, and cross or check the stream of things. The fuller and clearer illustration of his glory, the shewing that all things do not pass on in a fatal track; the confirming that he made nature, because he can command and control

Psal. cxix. 89, &c. Jer. v. 22. xxxiii. 25. xxxi. 36.

Ἀγαθὸς γὰρ ὢν οὐ παύεται πόθεν ἀγαθοεργῶν, καὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι παύεται. Clem. Alex. ibid.

Psal. cxix. 91. cxlviii. 8. Isa. xl. 26. Psal. civ. 9, 19.

John ix. 3. Exod. vii. 5. Deut. iv. 35. Dan. iv. 25.

t; the demonstration of his especial care over and love toward men, in suspending or thwarting his own established laws and decrees, as it were, for their sake; the exciting men the more to mind God, and impressing on them a respect toward him; the begetting faith in him, and hope in his providence, are fair accounts, for which God sometimes should perform (even in a manner notorious and remarkable to us) actions extraordinary. And that God doeth so, we learn in the words I read from the mouth of truth itself; whose affirmation (for persuading the incredulous) I intend to second with particular instances, attested to by reasonable proof, suitable to the nature of the matter; and this with design to infer from such operations (as effects assignable to no other cause) the existence of God; having endeavoured formerly to deduce the same from the common ordinary works, appearing in both worlds, natural and human. And as we before distinguished the ordinary works or actions, so here we shall distinguish the extraordinary ones, into two sorts; into those which are above or against the course (or power) of nature; and those, which surmount or cross the stream of human affairs; such as being evidenced and granted to have been really performed, either all men will believe, or the wisest men will readily confess the being of such a cause as we assert. SERM. IX.

I. Let us first consider the first kind: and of these we may generally affirm, that no man can deny many such to have been performed, without giving the lie to the most authentic records of history that are or have been extant; without extremely disparaging the credit of mankind; without impeaching all nations and all ages not only of extreme weakness, (in

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credulous assent unto, regarding and relying upon, such appearances; which not only the vulgar sort, but even princes and statesmen, learned men and philosophers, every where have done,) but of notorious baseness and dishonesty, in devising and reporting them[b]; without indeed derogating utterly from all testimony that can be rendered to any matter of fact, and rendering it wholly insignificant; for that if we may disbelieve these reports, there is no reason we should believe any thing that is told us.

To this kind we may refer the presignification and prediction of future events, especially those which are contingent, and depend upon man's free choice; to the doing of which nothing is more evident in itself, nor more acknowledged by all, than that a power or wisdom supernatural is required; concerning which we have the (not despicable) consent of all times, continued down from the remotest antiquity, that frequently they have been made: *There is*, saith Cicero, *an ancient opinion, drawn even from the heroical times*, (that is, from the utmost bounds of time spoken of,) *that there is among men a certain divination, which the Greeks call prophecy*, (or inspiration,) *that is, a presension, and knowledge of future things*[c]. And of this kind even pro-

[b] Nostrum quidem, inquit [Socrates,] humanum est consilium, sed de rebus et obscuris et incertis ad Apollinem censeo referendum, ad quem etiam Athenienses publice de majoribus rebus semper retulerunt, &c. *Cic. de Divin.* p. 206.

[c] Vetus opinio est jam usque ab heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque et populi Romani, et omnium hominum firmata consensu versari quandam inter homines divinationem; quam Græci μαντικὴν appellant, id est, præsensionem et scientiam rerum futurarum. *De Div.*

fane story doth afford many instances; there indeed having scarce happened any considerable revolution in state, or action in war, whereof we do not find mentioned in history some presignification or prediction[d]; whereof though many were indeed dark and ambiguous, or captious and fallacious, yet some were very clear and express, (according as God was in his wisdom pleased to use the ministry of those spirits, which immediately conveyed them, in directing men for their good, or misguiding them for their deserved punishment;) such as were, for instance, that concerning Cyrus's conquering the Lydians; that concerning the battle at Salamis; that concerning the battle of Leuctres[e]; and divers others which occur in stories composed by wise men of the wisest nations; even the life of one man, (good Socrates,) described by excellent persons his most intimate acquaintance, (Xenophon and Plato,) affords divers; and Cicero acquaints us, that Chrysippus did collect (and it is great pity his collection hath perished) an innumerable store of them, all confirmed by good authority and testimony[f]. I cannot stand to relate many of them particularly, or discuss the validity of relations concerning such instances: I shall only say, that discourse in Tully, concerning the oracle at Delphos, which may be extended to the rest of that sort, doth

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Vid. Cic. de Divin. p. 206. de Nat. Deor. ii. p. 54.

[d] Gentem quidem nullam video neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem, tamque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, et a quibusdam intelligi, prædicique posse censeat. *Idem.*

[e] Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἡμίονος, &c. Herod. 1.

Ὦ θείη Σάλαμις, &c. Herod. 7.

Λεύκτρα δέ μοι σκιόεντα μέλει, &c. Pausan. ix. pag. 563.

[f] Collegit innumerabilia oracula Chrysippus, nec ullum sine locuplete auctore, atque teste. *De Div.* 172.

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Æneid. 3.

> Accipite ergo animis, atque hæc mea figite dicta,
> Quæ Phœbo Pater omnipotens, mihi Phœbus Apollo
> Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima pando:

Notandum Apollinem quæ dicit a Jove cognoscere.

where Servius notes, that even Apollo (he who among their deities was in chief esteem for rendering oracles) *is said to derive his knowledge from Jove*, or the Sovereign God.

It seemed not amiss to touch those instances of this kind which profane story yields, but the holy scriptures afford most evident and eminent ones; some of them extant in books written and in use long before the events foretold: as that of Abraham's concerning his posterity sojourning and being afflicted in Egypt four hundred years; of the prophet con-

Gen. xv. 13.

1 Kings xiii. 2.

[g] Defendo unum hoc, nunquam illud oraculum Delphis tam celebre, et tam clarum fuisset, neque tantis donis refertum omnium populorum atque regum, nisi omnis ætas oraculorum illorum veritatem esset experta, &c. P. 172.

cerning Josiah, (some hundred years before his birth,) that such a prince should be, and what he should do; of Isaiah concerning Cyrus *by name*, his conquests, his restoring the Jews from exile, his reedifying Jerusalem; of Jeremiah concerning the captivity, and its duration for seventy years; of Daniel concerning the grand revolutions of empire in the world, (wherein the achievements of Alexander and his successors are so plainly described, that Porphyrius could not but acknowledge the consonancy of them to the events; of our Saviour concerning the siege and destruction of Jerusalem: the truth of which reports, although we should allow those writings which contain them an authority no greater than human, there were no reason to question; since most of those writings were extant a good time before the events specified. Now if but one of these innumerable instances were true, if ever one event hath been presignified or predicted, (and it were a hard case, that among so many not one should prove so,) it sufficiently evinces what we intend.

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Isa. xliv. & xlv. Jer. xxv. 12. xxix. 10. Dan. ix. 2. Vid. Chrys. cont. Jud. 2. tom. vi. p. 328. Dan. viii. 21, &c. Luke xix. 43. Matt. xxiv. 2.

But to our purpose especially do appertain the works usually styled *miraculous*, which exceed or contravene the ordinary course or power of nature; which therefore all men will readily confess performable only by an agent in power or knowledge exceeding their comprehension, (such as are, for example, the fire being withheld from burning, and the waters from flowing; the sick being (without medicinal applications) cured of long chronical distempers; limbs being (in the like manner) restored to persons maimed, and senses to them who from their birth (or otherwise for a long time) had been deprived of their use; restoring the dead to life, (a

John iii. 2.

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thing which Pliny mentions as impossible in his conceit to God himself[g],) and the like:) of these, although all nations have had so many performed among them, as sufficed to breed every where a constant opinion, that a divine power did frequently interpose, so as to control and overbear the force of nature, (which opinion could not in likelihood so generally and constantly prevail without any ground at all;) yet the holy scriptures do most fully and clearly testify concerning them to have been in great number performed, (for the confirmation of that divine truth and will of God, which they declare him pleased to reveal; for guiding men into, or settling them in, right opinions or good practices; for disabusing and withdrawing them from ways of error and vice; for the encouragement and relief of good, or the restraint, discouragement, and chastisement of evil men; which in reason are the most proper causes, why by such a Being, as we suppose, (so wise, so good,) such works should be effected;) the testimonies concerning which there can be no good reason assigned of refusing, but very great to admit them, as we hope at another time satisfactorily to declare. Indeed God's patefaction of himself, his mind, his will, (in many kinds and manners particularly to the Fathers of old, and afterward generally to all the world by his Son; on purpose sent from heaven to publish and accomplish his designs of mercy and favour to all mankind,) accompanied with so many prodigious works of power, and so many glorious circumstances of providence conspi-

Φήμη δ' οὔτις πάμπαν ἀπόλλυται, ἥντινα πολλοὶ λαοὶ φημίζουσι.

g Ne Deum quidem posse omnia. Namque nec sibi potest consciscere mortem, nec mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos. *Nat. Hist.* ii. 7.

cuous to all the world, and withal so accommodated as to beget first of all this assurance in us, that a Divine power doth exist and preside over all affairs both natural and human, is an argument which in all honest and well-disposed minds (not possessed with false prejudices, nor depraved by vicious inclinations) cannot but obtain effect; the fuller urging and confirming of which I shall refer to another season, when it will serve a more general purpose, even the confirming not only this part, but even the whole of our religion in gross: I shall only now briefly say concerning them, that considering the works themselves, they were in number so many and various; in kind so great and high; as to the manner of performance so naked and open, (being done in the face, and exposed to the senses of all men;) that there could be no reason to suspect any juggling or human artifice used about them: considering the witnesses that asserted them, they were persons who by their writings, by their behaviour, by the effect of their endeavours, approved themselves very intelligent; in their intentions very honest and free from any sinister design, in their conversations very innocent and virtuous, in their attestation very consistent and constant; so that there could be desired no witnesses of any fact better qualified, or more credible than they: considering the design of those works, there could be none more noble and excellent, more worthy of God, more beneficial to man; it being chiefly the confirmation of a doctrine, incomparably the most reasonable and most useful that ever appeared among men; productive of the best fruits, apt (being entertained heartily) to make men highly good and truly happy; SERM. IX.

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to promote the honour of God and the interests of goodness; to secure as much as can be both the public and private welfare of mankind. Considering which things, we can have no good reason to distrust the performance of such works, by authentic records, by constant tradition attested to us.

I may adjoin to the former sorts of extraordinary actions, some other sorts, the consideration of which (although not so directly and immediately) may serve our main design; those (which the general opinion of mankind hath approved, and manifold testimony hath declared frequently to happen) which concern apparitions from another world, as it were, of beings unusual; concerning spirits haunting persons and places, (these discerned by all senses, and by divers kinds of effects;) of which the old world (the ancient poets and historians) did speak so much, and of which all ages have afforded several attestations very direct and plain, and having all advantages imaginable to beget credence; concerning visions made unto persons of especial eminency and influence, (to priests and prophets;) concerning presignifications of future events by dreams; concerning the power of enchantments, implying the cooperation of invisible powers; concerning all sorts of intercourse and confederacy (formal or virtual) with bad spirits: all which things he that shall affirm to be mere fiction and delusion, must thereby with exceeding immodesty and rudeness charge the world with extreme both vanity and malignity; many, if not all, worthy historians, of much inconsiderateness or fraud; most lawgivers, of great silliness and rashness; most judicatories, of high stupidity or cruelty; a vast number of witnesses, of the greatest

malice or madness; all which have concurred to assert these matters of fact. SERM. IX.

It is true, no question, but there have been many vain pretences, many false reports, many unjust accusations, and some undue decisions concerning these matters; that the vulgar sort is apt enough to be abused about them; that even intelligent and considerate men may at a distance in regard to some of them be imposed upon; but, as there would be no false gems obtruded, if there were no true ones found in nature; as no counterfeit coin would appear, were there no true one current; so neither can we well suppose that a confidence in some to feign, or a readiness in most to believe, stories of this kind could arise, or should subsist, without some real ground, or without such things having in gross somewhat of truth and reality. However, that the wiser and more refined sort of men, highest in parts and improvements both from study and experience, (indeed the flower of every commonwealth; statesmen, lawgivers, judges, and priests,) upon so many occasions of great importance, after most deliberate scanning such pretences and reports, should so often suffer themselves to be deluded, to the extreme injury of particular persons concerned, to the common abusing of mankind, to the hazard of their own reputation in point of wisdom and honesty, seems nowise reasonable to conceive. In likelihood rather the whole kind of all these things, were it altogether vain and groundless, would upon so frequent and so mature discussions have appeared to be so, and would consequently long since have been disowned, exploded, and thrust out of the world; for, as upon this occasion it is said in Tully, *Time wipeth out*

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Now if the truth and reality of these things, (all or any of them,) inferring the existence of powers invisible, at least inferior ones, though much superior to us in all sort of ability, be admitted, it will at least (as removing the chief obstacles of incredulity) confer much to the belief of that supreme Divinity, which our Discourse strives to maintain.

I must acknowledge that both these arguments, drawn from testimonies concerning matters of fact, (and indeed all other arguments,) were invalid and insignificant, could any demonstration or any argument weighty enough be brought to shew the impossibility of such a thing to exist, as we infer to exist from them. But, as it is a very easy thing (so whoever is versed in speculation and reasoning about things cannot but find) to prove many things possible to be, which do not actually exist; so it is hard to prove the impossibility of a thing's being; yea there is plainly no other mean of doing this, than the manifesting an evident repugnance between being itself, and some property assigned to that thing; or between several properties attributed thereto; as if we should suppose a square circle, or a round square to exist. [h]But in our case no man can shew such a repugnance; between being and wisdom, power or goodness, there is no inconsistence

[g] Opinionum commenta dies delet, naturæ judicia confirmat. *De Nat. Deor.* ii. pag. 54.

[h] It is not enough to say peremptorily, it is nonsense; or that you cannot understand how it should be; such proceedings are intolerably both insolent and vain.

Ἀμύητοι γάρ εἰσιν οἱ οὐδὲν ἄλλο οἰόμενοι εἶναι, ἢ οὗ ἂν δύνωνται ἁπτῆς ταῖν χεροῖν λαβέσθαι. Plat. Theat.

surely; nor can any man evince one to be between being and coexisting with matter, or penetrating body; between being and insensibility; between being and any other property which we ascribe to God; nor is there any clashing between those properties themselves: it is therefore impossible to shew that God cannot exist; and therefore it is unreasonable to disbelieve the testimonies (so many, so pregnant) that declare him to exist. SERM. IX.

Men indeed, who affix themselves to things which their sense offers, may be indisposed to abstract their minds from such things, may be unapt to frame conceptions about any other sort of things; but to think there can be no other things than such as we see and feel, that nothing, endued with other properties than such as these objected to our sense have, can exist, implies a great dulness of apprehension, a greater shortness of reason and judgment; it is much like the simplicity of a rustic, who, because he never was above three miles from home, cannot imagine the world to reach ten miles further; and will look upon all that is told him, concerning things more distant, to be false, and forged to abuse him. I add, that these men's incredulity is hence more inexcusable, because the possibility of such a being's existence, the compatibility and concurrence of such properties in one thing, is (as we otherwhere have largely shewed) by a very plain instance declared, even by that being within every man, which in a degree partakes of all those properties. —affigit humi divinæ particulam auræ.

I shall leave this head of discourse, with this one remark; that they are much mistaken, who place a kind of wisdom in being very incredulous, and unwilling to assent to any testimony, how full and clear

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soever: for this indeed is not wisdom, but the worst kind of folly. It is folly, because it causes ignorance and mistake, with all the consequents of these; and it is very bad, as being accompanied with disingenuity, obstinacy, rudeness, uncharitableness, and the like bad dispositions; from which credulity itself, the other extreme sort of folly, is exempt. Compare we, I say, these two sorts of fools; the credulous fool, who yields his assent hastily upon any slight ground; and the suspicious fool, who never will be stirred by any the strongest reason or clearest testimony; we shall find the latter in most respects the worst of the two; that his folly arises from worse causes, hath worse adjuncts, produceth worse effects. Credulity may spring from an airy complexion, or from a modest opinion of one's self; suspiciousness hath its birth from an earthy temper of body, or from self-conceit in the mind: that carries with it being civil and affable, and apt to correct an error; with this a man is intractable, unwilling to hear, stiff and incorrigible in his ignorance or mistake: that begets speed and alacrity in action; this renders a man heavy and dumpish, slow and tedious in his resolutions and in his proceedings: both include want of judgment; but this pretending to more thereof, becomes thereby more dangerous. Forward rashness, which is the same with that, may sometimes, like an acute disease, undo a man sooner; but stupid dotage, little differing from this, is (like a chronical distemper) commonly more mischievous, and always more hard to cure. In fine, were men in their other affairs, or in ordinary converse, so diffident to plain testimony, as some do seem to be in these matters concerning religion, they would soon

feel great inconveniences to proceed thence; their business would stick, their conversation would be distasteful; they would be much more offensive, and no less ridiculous than the most credulous fool in the world. While men therefore so perversely distrustful affect to seem wise, they affect really to be fools; and practise according to the worst sort of folly. SERM. IX.

Thus have I, although very cursorily, considered the first kind of works extraordinary that appear in the world: I proceed briefly to touch the other sort, observable in the transaction of human affairs; for even in these there do happen things in a sort miraculous, or prodigious; according to reasonable estimation surpassing the common efficacy of human causes; by which God in a language more express, as it were, and in a louder tone, declares his presence and providence here; so that they must be very deaf and stupid, who do not from them learn lessons of piety and reverence toward God; who do not in them hear Heaven thundering forth that proclamation to us all: *Discite justitiam moniti.* For instance,

1. We may observe, when any where things are come to such a pass, that iniquity and outrage do extremely prevail, so that the most of men's lives become intolerably grievous, that in such cases often the state of things, how seemingly stable and robust soever, in a manner sudden and strange, by means so appearance small and weak, to be overturned, and reduced to a more tolerable form; no struglings of might, no fetches of policy, no circumspection or industry of man availing to uphold it, an invisible hand checking all such force, and crossing all such devices. *A stone cut out of the mountains* Dan. ii. 45.

SERM. IX. *without hands*, (that is, a slender instrument coming forth out of some remote or secret place, without any considerable influence of human endeavour,) *breaking in pieces the iron, and the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold*; there being raised up instantly a Moses, or a Maccabæus; an Ehud, or a Gideon; a Dion, or a Timoleon, by a single stroke, or a sudden impression, to deliver oppressed nations from slavery.

2. How many examples do experience and history afford us of justice and vengeance, in ways for their kind and for their circumstances very remarkable, executed in the face of the world upon persons (such as Corah and his fellows, Sennacherib, Herod, Brennus) notoriously wicked and mischievous, who have outbraved Heaven by their impiety, or horribly abused mankind by their injustice!

3. Yea, we may take notice, that even few of those men, whose actions have been illustrious for greatness void of goodness; who have climbed to height of power and state by the ruins and slaughters of mankind; that, I say, few of such persons have departed off the stage in peace or honour. That Alexander was snapt in the flower of his age and glory; that Cæsar was no sooner arrived to the top of his fortune, than to the bottom of his life; neither having time allowed them to enjoy, scarce to taste, those fruits which they so eagerly sought and toiled for; both perhaps (one without any peradventure) being speeded away by violent and treacherous hands. Not to mention Pompey or Hannibal, or other such like men of exorbitant ambition, whose fortunes were so strangely changed, and whose ends were so dismal.

Dan. iv. 17.

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4. We may however observe, that few great tyrants and oppressors, few persons insolently profane or sacrilegious, have escaped the visible stroke of Divine vengeance; a stroke inflicted in ways not only violent, but shameful; and that usually by means most unexpected, by the hands of their own guards, their own servants, their own favourites, the very instruments of their mischief, and these stirred up by slight causes, by some little disgrace or disgust received by them from their master[d]. What a long black legend of Caligula's, Nero's, Domitian's, Commodus's, Heliogabalus's, Maximinus's[e], may any man's observation even out of profane histories easily compose, of whom the Divine justice in such ways hath rid the world? Ps. lxxxiii. 17, 18.

5. I might also mention the judgments of God upon persons and families raised to wealth and splendour of estate by oppression, fraud, sacrilege, rapine, or such bad means; whose estates without any visible ordinary means do moulder and decay; a secret moth devouring them; a thing which falls under common observation.

6. The same providence hath more clearly discovered itself in the strange detections of murders, and other enormous mischiefs committed in darkness, and revealed by a light unaccountably darted from Heaven. Of which kind not only books, but common experience doth furnish with stories and instances very remarkable both for number and weight.

7. The like strange discoveries of plots, contrived

[d] Alexand. Pheræus, ab uxore occisus. Vid. *Plut. in Pelopida, ad fin.*

[e] Of such as Sejanus, Ruffinus, Eutropius, &c. Stilico, &c.

SERM. IX. secretly against the public peace, and against the lives of princes, frequently offer themselves in story, and the like experience suggests concerning private men; Eccl. x. 20. *a bird of the air carrying the voice* of the wicked traitor to the ears of him who is designed against; Hab. ii. 11. *the stones of the wall crying out* treason and murder. Yea, generally, according to the Psalmist's observation, Psal. lxiv. 5, 7. when men have *encouraged themselves in an evil matter, and have communed about laying snares privily—saying, who shall see them? God doth shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly they are wounded.* So that all men have reason, as he adds they will do, *to fear, and to declare the work of God,* if they *wisely consider his doing:* and himself had reason to pronounce in another Psal. ix. 16. place; *The Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.*

8. I might adjoin the remarkable providences Ps. xxxvii. 25. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken. which also occur, concerning the recompenses and encouragements of virtue; in the protecting good men from imminent dangers, delivering them from grievous straits, supplying them in extreme needs, prospering them in their undertakings, raising them (as Joseph, David, Daniel, &c.) by wonderful means to wealth and dignity, for their own encouragement, or for public benefit; concerning which occurrences Ps. cvii. 43. the Psalmist had reason to say, *Whoso is wise will observe these things, and they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord.*

These considerations, with divers others of the same kind, grounded on Providence, I must confess have not, singly taken, the greatest force and evidence to infer our purpose, nor can they with the

ame assurance and peremptoriness be urged to very adversary or disbeliever, as some other argu- nents may; those, which we have formerly insisted n, drawn from nature. For in nature, all causes here being themselves destitute of immediate rea- on or choice, and subject to no chance or contin- ency, (properly so called,) we may indeed confi- lently ascribe all effects, in which any reason or ounsel doth appear, whether ordinary or extraor- linary, to Divine efficacy; there being no other ause, to which we can reasonably impute them: ut in human affairs, seeing man is an understand- ng and free agent, and few effects happen without ome act of his intervening, there can hardly occur ny passage, how rare and strange soever, which our ncredulous adversaries, with some kind of colour or lausible shift, will not be ready to attribute unto ome reach of man's wit, or to some *capricio* of his umour, or to some unaccountable casualty, incident o matters of this kind; (as we see the Philistines were apt to impute the plague of emerods to chance; he Israelites did presently charge that terrible judg- ment on Corah and his complices upon Moses and Aaron.) And commonly divine and human influ- ences upon these effects (even as in nature the in- fluences of Heaven and of inferior particular causes) are so complicated and interwoven together, that it is not so easy to distinguish the one from the other, either in whole or in part, to separate the bounds of providence ordinary and extraordinary, to discern what God performs by usual instruments, what by his immediate hand. As also the actions of the wisest men are often grounded upon reasons remote from, and impenetrable by, vulgar conceit; so are

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Vid. Claud. in Ruffin. lib. 1. init. eleganter hac de re disserentem.

Sen. de Provid. init.

1 Sam. vi. 9. Numb. xvi. 41.

SERM. IX. the reasons of God's proceedings with men various and often mysterious; above the reach of our capacity with distinction to apprehend them: as who, for instance, can oftentimes readily distinguish between God's merciful patience toward bad men, and his gracious recompensing the good; between God's just vengeance on the one sort, and his fatherly correction of the other; between his reclaiming one from vice, either, as particular circumstances require, by adverse or prosperous events, and his trying or exercising the other's virtue by the like proceedings? Who can distinguish between what is performed or permitted upon general or upon particular accounts; in respect to the public, or in regard to private men; in relation to present times, or to posterity; upon absolute and immediate accounts, or in order to some further, more remote designs? Who, I say, can pretend skill enough to define what or how much is best to be done in these cases; when it is fit to allow men to proceed in the use of their freedom, when to interrupt them? Who, but he that exactly knows the limits of just and fit, the qualities and tempers of men, the state and circumstances of every thing?

I add, that God's governance of things hath no complete issue here; that this is not the only nor the chief place of dispensing rewards and punishments; that things arè but doing here; and not done; in a progress and tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a state of final resolution or perfection: wherefore as we cannot fully judge of an artificial work by its first draughts, nor of a poem by some scenes, but must stay till all is finished and acted through; so we cannot so clearly discern the

entire wisdom and justice of Divine dispensations here; not till that day, when, as St. Paul tells us, God's δικαιοκρισία, *his righteous judgment, shall be made apparent.* Whence discourse grounded upon present events may not prove so convincing or satisfactory, except unto the children of wisdom, who by a sharper sense can discover even the smaller lines and more occult tracts of God's hand; who with an especial attention and sagacity do, as the prophet expresseth it, *regard the works of the Lord, and consider the operations of his hands.* However, the frequent occurrences in human affairs of passages, such as we mentioned, so rare and remarkable, if they do not, singly and solitarily taken, thoroughly serve to demonstrate the hypothesis of Divine providence, yet at least they do much favour and strengthen it, being very congruous thereto. Supposing such a Providence, it is most probable (I may say necessary) that such events would happen; whence there can be no absurdity in ascribing them thereto, but much of reason in doing it. They are *digni vindice nodi,* difficulties not otherwise easily resolved, and therefore God may be most fitly introduced, as the most probable cause of them; if strict discourse cannot compel us, yet ingenuity will incline us, and wisdom will oblige us, to do so. *They that are wise will consider these things, and they shall understand the lovingkindness* (I add, and also both the wisdom and power) *of the Lord. A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this,* saith the Psalmist, concerning the proceedings of Providence.

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Rom. ii. 5. Psal. x. 5.

Ps. xxviii. 5. Isa. v. 12.

Ps. cvii. 43. lxiv. 5, 7.

Ps. xcii. 6.

But however general providence doth work in convincing some, particular providence will at least

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produce that effect in many: for I dare appeal to most men (to those especially, who have ever had any fear of God, or sense of goodness in them,) if, sometime or other, in their lives, they have not in their pressing needs and straits (especially upon their addresses to God for help) found help and comfort conveyed unto them by an insensible hand; if they have not sometimes in a manner unaccountable escaped imminent dangers; if they have not in the performance of their duty and devotion toward God experienced a comfort more than ordinary; if they cannot to some events of their life aptly apply those observations of the Psalmist: *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good. O taste and see;* he appeals to experience; he supposes the Divine goodness may be seen and felt; that surely will be a most efficacious argument of God's existence and providence. And so it is indeed to all good men, for whose comfort and confirmation it is chiefly mentioned, though it is not likely to have much influence upon them who have alienated themselves from God, and driven him *out of their thoughts;* except they should (beyond what can be expected from them) be so civil and candid, as to believe the testimony of others, who assert this great truth unto them from their own inward conscience and experience.

Ps. xxxiv. 6, 7, 8. cxlv. 18, 19.

(1 John v. 10.)

Psal. x. 4.

But let thus much serve, at present, for the shewing that *God doth*, as our Lord tells us, *hitherto work;* and consequently that, as we thence meant to infer, God doth exist.

The Father,

SERMON X.

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER.

EPH. iv. 6.

One God and Father of all.

I HAVE formerly discoursed concerning the nature of that belief which we here profess: I did also endeavour by several arguments to evince the truth and credibility of the first article of our Creed, which is indeed the foundation of all the rest, and of all religion, *that there is one God.* I proceed to the following parts. SERM. X.

The Father. The appellation of God not improperly taken, (as when it is attributed to creatures, upon some resemblance in nature or office which they bear to the supreme God,) but relating to him who only, truly, and properly is styled God, is sometimes put absolutely, sometime hath a relative apposition going along with it. Being absolutely or singly put, it sometimes refers, by way of eminency, particularly to the first Person in the blessed and glorious Trinity; as when Christ is called the *Son of God;*

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when God is put in distinction from the other Persons, (when, for instance, it is said, *That they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Word was with God. To serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven.* And in that form of blessing, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all;*) but commonly it is to be understood for God essentially considered, (according to the Divine essence common to all three Persons,) to whom in that respect all the Divine attributes agree, and from whom all Divine operations (*absolute et ad extra*) do jointly proceed. And to this sense or notion we have hitherto supposed that the name of God might be here applied. For, that there is one God, having such essential attributes, is the first principle and foundation of all religion, which we must therefore suppose, if not directly expressed, yet at least sufficiently implied in the Creed.

And supposing the word in part doth imply this sense, the attribute or title of Father doth upon many accounts truly and properly belong to God, (God absolute and essential,) in relation to all things generally, and to some things particularly; especially, which is the most fruitful consideration, in respect to ourselves.

Let us first consider the accounts upon which, then the terms (or objects) in relation to which, God is so called; then let us apply the consideration to practice.

One God and Father of all. SERM. X.

Every attribute, every title, every relation of God doth ground an obligation, doth afford an inducement to good practice; but none other doth ground higher obligation, or yieldeth stronger inducement to all kinds of obedience, than doth this of *Father*, which here, and frequently otherwhere in holy scripture, is ascribed to God: unto which purpose, of exciting us to good practice, (to all good practice generally, and particularly to some kinds thereof,) I do now intend to apply the consideration thereof: but first let us consider in what respects, or upon what grounds, this title is attributed to God; then let us reflect somewhat upon the term, in respect to which God is styled *Father of all*, that is, in a larger sense of all things, in a stricter sense of all persons, in the most restrained sense of all us Christians.

The title of *father* is upon several accounts commonly given to things; one is causality; for the efficient cause, or author of any thing, is called its father; any work is said to be the child, or offspring, of him that maketh or inventeth it; *Hath the rain a father*, (or, *Who is father of the rain?* as the LXX render it,) *or who hath begotten the drops of the dew?* saith God in Job: another ground thereof is sustenance, or preservation; so Job saith of himself, that *he was a father to the poor and fatherless*, because he yielded them protection and relief; so, *Roma patrem patriæ Ciceronem libera dixit*, Rome called Cicero father, because he preserved it from the attempts of wicked conspirators against its liberty and safety: education also and instruction entitle to this name; whence St. Paul calleth Ti- Job xxxviii. 28. Job xxix. 16. xxxi. 18. 1 Tim. i. 2.

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mothy and Philemon, the Corinthians and Galatians, whom he had instructed in the Christian faith, his *children:* lastly, governance, attended with beneficent affection and care, doth found this appellation; whence princes are usually styled the *fathers of their country,* being supposed to desire and to provide for the public good; so we have the *fathers of tribes,* that is, the principal persons of them, who did preside over them: I do omit antiquity and age, for which we know that persons are vulgarly called fathers.

Philem. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 15. Gal. iv. 19. Josh. xix. 51. xxi. 1.

Upon all these accounts it is plain that the title of Universal Father may truly be ascribed unto God; especially in respect to ourselves, who may be considered as equivalent to all other objects, as comprehending in us somewhat common to them all: God in some of those respects is the Father of all things, or of us as beings; God is more especially the Father of intelligent beings, and of us as such; God is the Father of all men, of all good men, and peculiarly of Christians; which respects all of them do or should concur in us. Let us survey those particulars somewhat distinctly, then apply them as obligations and inducements to good practice.

1. God is the Father of all things, or of us as creatures; as the efficient cause and creator of them all: *He made the world,* as St. Paul telleth the Athenians, *and all things therein; He commanded,* saith the Psalmist, *and they were created; The world and the fulness thereof,* (that is, all wherewith it is replenished, and which it contains,) *he hath founded them; All these things,* saith God in the Prophet, *hath mine hand made:* and Ποιητὴν, καὶ Πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς, *the Maker and Father of*

Acts xvii. 24. xiv. 15. Psal. cxlv. 15. cxlvi. 6. lxxxix. 11. xxxiii. 6. Isa. lxvi. 2. xl. 26. Plat. in Tim. pag. 1047.

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this universe, even Plato styleth God. God is also the Father of all things, because he preserveth and sustaineth them by his power; *He*, saith the apostle to the Hebrews, *beareth up all things by the word of his power; He*, saith the Psalmist, *hath established them for ever and ever; he made a decree which shall not pass*, by virtue of which they subsist: also because he by a continual care doth provide for them: *They all*, saith the Psalmist, *wait upon him, that he may give them their meat in due season; what he giveth them, they gather; he openeth his hand, they are filled with good:* he also governeth, and containeth them in good order; for, *his kingdom ruleth over all;* and, *whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that doeth he in heaven and earth:* all this he doeth with goodness and affection: for, *his tender mercies are over all his works:* whence even among pagans the word *Pater* absolutely put, did signify the *Supreme God*, they understanding thereby the Author, Preserver, and Governor of all things; and *Pater omnipotens* is the periphrasis, whereby the wisest poet doth usually express God[a].

Heb. i. 3. Psal. cxlv. 15. Psal. civ. 27. cxlv. 15. Isa. xl. 26. Psal. cxv. 3. ciii. 19. cxxxv. 6. cxlvii. 15. cxlv. 9.

2. More especially God is the Father of intellectual beings; he is styled *the Father of spirits:* particularly the angels in way of excellency are called the sons of God: *There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord:* and, *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy;* in

Heb. xii. 9. Num. xvi. 22. Job i. 6. Job xxxviii. 7.

[a] —— o Pater, et Rex Jupiter— *Hor. Serm.* ii. 1.
—— Pater ipse colendi
Haud facilem esse viam voluit— *Virg. Georg.* i. 121.
Ζεῦ πάτερ ἡμέτερε Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων. Hom. Il. θ'. 31.

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which place of Job the LXX. have ἄγγελοί μου, *my angels*; (although perhaps there all God's creatures may be understood rejoicing and exulting, as it were, in their being, newly by the goodness of their Maker conferred on them:) again, *Who*, saith the Psalmist, *in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?* the sons of the mighty; it is in the Hebrew, *the sons of God*, and so the LXX. render it; and what precedeth, *who in heaven*, doth make it, as it seems, best interpretable of the angels. Of such beings God is more especially the Father, because he did produce them in a more excellent manner; for other things he made as it were by his hand, these he breathed out of his mouth; as it is said of Adam, when God infused his soul into his body, that *God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*; because they more nearly resemble God in their nature and properties, (in spirituality, and independence upon matter; in life, and self-moving; in immortality, and perpetuity of being; in understanding, and wisdom; in will, and goodness; or in a capacity at least of such perfections;) because also he ruleth them in a nobler way; a way, not of blind and constrained obedience, but of wise and free choice, according to laws of justice, by obligations of ingenuity; because he likewise beareth a more dear affection unto them, and a peculiar care over them: in respect to these beings indeed the relation of father is more proper, because they only can be sensible thereof, and capable to render the duties of piety, gratitude, and willing obedience suitable thereto; *Rational beings*, saith an Ethnic philosopher, *are the sons of God, because they only are na-*

Ps. lxxxix. 6. xxix. 1.

Gen. ii. 7.

Psal. ciii. 20.

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rally fit to converse with God, being conjoined him by participation of reason[b]: and thus in- ed even the pagan theologers, commonly from pri- tive general tradition we may suppose, did con- ive the Supreme God to be the Father of the ds, (intending not such gods as were of man's de- ing, creatures deified by the flattery or fondness the vulgar, but of higher rank, answering to our gels, whom they supposed as to approach in ex- lency of nature nearest to God, so to have derived eir being from him, and to attend constantly upon n, partaking of his glory, and observing his plea- re;) whence *Divûm pater, Father of the gods,* a common periphrasis, or title of God among em; and particularly in the *Timæus* of Plato ere is an oration which he representeth God king unto those creatures presently upon their eation, beginning thus; *O ye chief gods, of whom am the Framer and Father;* concerning which ds that which he can say, he pretendeth to de- ce from ancient original tradition. But to come arer to our more particular concernment.

Θεοὶ θεῶν, ὧν ἐγὼ δημιουργὸς, πατὴρ τε—

3. God is the Father, in a more especial manner, mankind: *Have we not,* saith the prophet, *one uther? hath not one God created us?* and Adam called *the son of God,* the genealogy of all men minating in him; and, We are *all God's off- ring,* saith St. Paul: we are so, for that *his nds made and fashioned our bodies;* and for it he *formed our spirit within us,* as the prophet eaketh. He made us *after his own image,* so as

Mal. ii. 10. Luke iii. 38. Acts xvii. 29. Job x. 8. Ps. cxxxix. 15, 16. Zech. xii. 1. Ps. xxxiii. 15. Gen. i. 27.

[b] Ὅτι κοινωνεῖν μόνον ταῦτα πέφυκε τῷ Θεῷ τῆς συναναστροφῆς κατὰ λόγον ἐπιτετλεγμένα. Arr. Epict. i. 9.

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signally to represent and resemble himself, in properties of nature, and in eminence of condition; in this great family of visible creatures he hath assigned unto us the principal station, so that other creatures there are but as servants waiting on us; we are as children, depending only on him; he hath shewed an especial tenderness of affection and goodwill toward us, in providing for us all manner of needful sustenance and comfortable accommodation; continually watching over us for our good, and *holding us up*, as the Psalmist speaketh, *from our mother's womb*; bestowing on us good education, (instructing us by the light of nature, or dictates of natural reason and conscience, by civil conversation, by the precepts of wise men, and examples of virtuous persons, by providential encouragements to good, and determents from evil; together with the secret whispers, advices, and motions of his grace;) bearing with excessive patience our infirmities, miscarriages, and offences; using seasonable and moderate chastisements to reclaim us from bad courses to those which our duty and our advantage do require: in short, all God's dealings and demeanour toward mankind do argue in him a paternal regard thereto: whence even the blind heathens discerned and acknowledged this general relation of God to men; and, *Gentis humanæ Pater, atque custos*, (*O Father, and keeper of mankind!*) was an invocation suitable to their notion concerning him: from him they deduced our original; to him they ascribed the formation of our bodies, so full of wonderful artifice; from him they affirm our souls to be extracted; from his goodness and care they supposed all the conveniences of life which we enjoy to be derived.; they

Psal. lxxi. 6.

Hor. Carm. i. 12. Epict. i. 3, 9.

conceived him to bear a kind affection unto man, and to have a constant care over him; as by many express testimonies might be shewed, and from their practices evidently may be inferred[c]. SERM. X.

Charior est illis homo, quam sibi.

4. Further, yet more especially God is the Father of all good men; such a relation being yet built upon higher grounds and respects; for as *good* they have another original from him; virtue springeth in their hearts from a heavenly seed; that emendation and perfection of nature is produced by his grace enlightening and quickening them: they are images of him, resembling him in judgment and disposition of mind, in will and purpose, in action and behaviour; the which resemblances do argue them to be the sons of God, and indeed do constitute them such; for, *Love your enemies*, saith our Lord, *bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you— that you may be the sons of your Father in heaven;* and, *Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing thence; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the sons of the Most High.* Imitation of God in goodness and beneficence doth, we see, found a filial relation unto God: to such, God answerably doth bear a paternal kindness and compassion; for, *Like as a father pitieth his children, so*, saith the Psalmist, *the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* He in all respects dealeth with them as with his children; ὡς υἱοῖς προσφέρεται, as the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh: he teacheth and guideth them with wholesome advice upon

Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est. *Sen. Epist.* 41.

1 Pet. i. 23.

Matt. v. 44, 45.

Luke vi. 35.

Psal. ciii. 13.

Heb. xii. 7.

[c] Omnes si ad primam originem revocentur, a diis sunt. *Sen. Ep.* 44.

A natura divina haustos animos, et delibutos habemus. *Cic. de Div.* 1.

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all occasions; for, *What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose;* and, *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord:* he gently removeth and correcteth them; *Whom,* saith the Wise Man, *God loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth:* he maintaineth them with all needful sustenance and accommodation without their care or trouble; for, *Take no care,* saith our Saviour, *saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?—for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things;* he so knoweth and considereth it, as to provide, that *there shall not be,* as the Psalmist affirmeth, *any want unto them that fear him:* he protecteth them from all danger, supporteth them in all distress, and rescueth them from all mischief; for, *His eyes are open upon the righteous—to deliver his soul from death, and to keep him alive in famine; he keepeth all his bones, so that none of them is broken—though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand; many are his afflictions, but the Lord delivereth him out of all.* Such paternal affections doth God bear, such paternal acts doth he exercise, toward good men; the which even pagan wise men did apprehend; of whom one thus expresseth himself; *God,* saith he, *hath a fatherly mind toward good men, and strongly loveth them—between them and God there is a friendship which virtue doth conciliate; a friendship, do I say? yea, a kindred and similitude; for that a good man is God's disciple and imitator, and his true offspring, whom that magnificent Father, no softly exacter*

Psal. xxv. 12. xxxvii. 23.

Prov. iii. 12.

Matt. vi. 31. vii. 11.

Psal. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 11.

Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19.

Ps. xxxiv. 20. xxxvii. 24.

Ps. xxxiv. 19.

Patrium habet Deus adversus bonos viros animum, et illos fortiter amat, &c. *Sen. de Provid.* 1. 2.

of virtue, doth, after the manner of severe parents, educate hardly. SERM. X.

5. We may further observe, that God in his proceedings with men, whereby he particularly designeth to contain them within bounds of duty, and thereby to lead them unto happiness, delighteth to represent himself under this obliging and endearing relation: thus he did in regard to his ancient people upon all occasions express himself; *Who are Israelites, whose is the adoption,* saith St. Paul, reckoning this as the first of those privileges which appertain to the Jews: it was the commission to Moses; *Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn; and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me:* Moses also, foreseeing how that people would misbehave themselves, doth thus in God's name expostulate with them; *Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy Father that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee:* David also thus addresseth himself to God in their behalf: *Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever; thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty:* and, *Doubtless,* saith Isaiah, *thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting:* and, *I am,* saith God in Jeremiah, *a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn; Is Ephraim my dear son, is he a pleasant child? he is,* the

Rom. ix. 4.

Exod. iv. 22.

Deut. xxxii. 6, 18.

1 Chron. xxix. 10, 11.

Is. lxiii. 16. xliv. 2, 24. xlvi. 3.

Jer. xxxi. 9, 20.

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LXX. render it, in way of assertion, not of interrogation.

6. But in the Christian dispensation God more signally representeth himself in this quality and notion. God herein treateth us, not so much as our Lord and Master, with imperious rigour and awfulness, as our Father, with most gracious condescen-
Heb. ii. 11. sion, and allurements of kindness: *Our Lord* (the only Son of God in a sense infinitely most peculiar and high) *was not,* saith the apostle, *ashamed to*
John xx. 17. *call us brethren; Go,* said our Lord, for instance of that gracious condescension, *to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father; both my God, and your God:* and such are the advantages peculiar to Christians, grounding this relation toward them, that St. Paul, comparing our state in regard to God with that of
Gal. iv. 7. the Jews, doth thus infer; *So that thou* (O Christian) *art not now a servant, but a son:* so it is asserted, and accordingly (which is worth our while distinctly to observe) all the performances of God toward us, and in our behalf, are of such a nature, and are set out in such terms, as do ground and import this relation: for,

1. The reception of a believer into the participation of the privileges and advantages which Chris-
Gal. iv. 5. Eph. i. 5. ii. 19. Rom. viii. 15. tianity tendereth, is termed υἱοθεσία, the making him a son; the adopting him into God's family, the conferring upon him the title and quality of God's child; together with the internal disposition of mind, and the liberty of access and intercourse,
John i. 12. which do suit that relation: *Whosoever,* saith St. John, *did receive him, to them he gave the power* (or privilege) *to become the sons of God, even to*

them who believed in his name: and, *Ye are all,* saith St. Paul, *the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus;* that is, by sincerely embracing Christianity: and, *Behold,* saith St. John again, *what manner of love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God:* and, *Ye have not received the spirit of servitude unto fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father;* that is, by which in our prayers with humble affection we freely, confidently, and readily, according to our Saviour's institution, do say, *Our Father.* SERM. X. Gal. iii. 26. 1 John iii. 1. (Eph. iii. 15.) Rom. viii. 15. Gal. iv. 6.

2. That renovation of our nature, and qualifying our minds, as the gospel prescribeth and requireth, is called regeneration, a new creation, a new birth, the begetting a new man within us: *If a man be not born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God;* that is, he cannot be a good Christian: *Whoever is begot of God doth not sin;* that is, good Christians do not live in a course of disobedience: *We are* αὐτοῦ ποίημα, *God's work,* or production, *being created in Christ Jesus to good works: Ye have been taught—to put on the new man, that is created according to the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.* In such terms is the effect of the Christian dispensation upon our hearts and lives described; and that with the greatest reason; for no act of God toward us can be more fatherly, than working in us by his grace the principles of Christian life, and the practices springing from it; nothing doth nearer advance us to a similitude with God, and a *participation of the Divine nature;* nothing doth conciliate from God a more tender affection to us, or worketh in us a more du- John iii. 3. 1 John iii. 9. Eph. ii. 10. Eph. iv. 21. Col. iii. 10. 2 Pet. i. 4.

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tiful affection toward him, answerable to this relation, than doth a hearty compliance with the grace of the gospel.

3. The resurrection of good Christians after death to a better state of life, their entering into immortal bliss and glory, is worthily styled παλιγγενεσία, a being generated and born again; whereby they receive from God another more excellent life and state of being, more like and conformable to God: for,

1 John iii. 2. *We know,* saith St. John, *that if he shall appear,* (or, that when he shall appear, as some copies read it,)

1 Cor. xv. 49. *we shall be like him;* and, *As,* saith St. Paul, *we have borne the image of the earthly* (Adam,)

2 Cor. iii. 18. *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly: We*

Phil. iii. 21. *shall,* saith he, *be metamorphosed,* or transfigured,

Luke xx. 35, 36. *into the same image:* and, *They,* saith our Saviour,

Matt. xix. 28. *which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead—are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection:* that state of bliss is therefore styled a portion or inheritance, allotted to sons, and consequent upon such a relation:

Gal. iv. 7. Rom. viii. 17. Col. iii. 24. Heb. ix. 15. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. *If sons,* saith St. Paul, *then heirs; heirs of God, and coheirs with Christ, receiving the reward and promise of an eternal inheritance: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* saith St. Peter, *who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.*

4. I might adjoin, that Christian men do become the sons of God by the intervention of our Saviour, assuming our nature, and conforming himself to the

likeness of men; whereby he becomes *the firstborn of many brethren: God*, saith St. Paul, *sent forth his son, born of a woman, that we might receive the privilege of being made sons:* and, *Children*, saith the apostle to the Hebrews, *partake of flesh and blood;* whence (as he meaneth to infer) our Lord being the Son of God, we upon conjunction of nature with him, and as his brethren, become also such: he further intimateth, that upon this score we do surpass angels themselves; for that *he took not on him the nature of angels, but took on him the seed of Abraham;* they were not, as we, dignified with a fraternal relation to the Son of God. SERM. X. Phil. ii. 7. Rom. viii. 3, 29. Gal. iv. 4, 5. Heb. ii. 11, 14. Heb. ii. 16.

In so many several respects is God our Father; we are his children, as being his creatures, made, preserved, and maintained by him; as we are intellectual creatures, being placed in degree and quality of nature so near him; as we by virtue and goodness (produced in us by his grace) do anywise approach him, resemble him, and partake of his special favour; as we are Christians, adopted into his heavenly family, renewed by his holy grace, and destinated to a participation of his eternal glory.

Now the consideration of these grounds, (each one of them, and all of them together,) upon which this relation of God unto us is founded, hath manifold good uses; it is apt to inform and admonish us concerning many necessary duties resulting from it; and to enforce upon us the practice of them.

1. It in general may teach, and should mind us, what reverence, honour, and observance is due from us unto God, in equity and justice, according to ingenuity and gratitude: *If*, saith God in the prophet, *I be a Father, where is my honour?* Our believing Mal. i. 6.

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and acknowledging this relation is vain, if we do not yield the respects, and perform the duties answerable thereto. And if indeed we are obliged to love, to respect, to observe those, who have been the instruments of God in producing, in nourishing, in breeding us, how much more are we bound to yield the same to him, who principally did, who continually doth, bestow upon us our being, together with all the supports, the conveniences, the comforts thereof; from whose free bounty we derive not only the benefits of this transitory life, but the inestimable privileges and blessings relating to the future incomparably better state? If we neglect our duty so grounded, may not God justly expostulate with us, as he did of old with those children of his: *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise: Is he not thy Father, who bought thee?* (or rather, who got thee, ὃς ἐκτήσατό σε, saith the Greek; and both that and the Hebrew do agree in expression of that thing with our common manner of speech;) *hath not he made thee, and established thee?* It is, as is there intimated, a part of extreme folly, no less than of injustice and ingratitude, to disregard and disobey him, to whom by such bands of duty and obligation we are allied: indeed the excellency of God's nature doth justly require honour and reverence to him; his sovereign power may also reasonably extort obedience from us; but his paternal benevolence and beneficence are the most obliging grounds, the most kindly inducements, to the practice of all piety toward him: we are foolishly unworthy in not being good on the other accounts; in not being so for these reasons we are monstrously base.

Deut. xxxii. 6, 18.

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2. This consideration may instruct and admonish us what we should be, and how we should behave ourselves; for that, if we be God's children, it becometh us, and we are obliged, in our disposition and demeanour, to resemble, to imitate him: it is natural and proper for children to resemble their parents in their complexion and countenance; to imitate them in their actions and carriage: *If ye*, argueth our Lord, *were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham*; ye would imitate him in readily believing and obeying God: and, *Ye*, saith he again, *are of your father the Devil, because ye perform the lusts of your father*; because in his envious, treacherous, murderous disposition and practice, ye resemble him: so if we be God's children, we must, according to St. Paul's exhortation, *imitate God, as dear children*; we must, in all imitable perfections, strive to be like him; so doth the scripture frequently (both in general, and as to particular cases or matters) apply and inculcate this point: God is holy and pure, so therefore ought we to be; *As obedient children*, saith St. Peter, *not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation*; and, *That*, saith St. Paul, *ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke*, (or irreprehensible sons of God,) *in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation*; and, *Beloved, now are we the sons of God*, saith St. John, subjoining—*and every one that hath this hope* (a hope grounded upon, or springing from, such a relation) *purifieth himself, as God is pure*: God is perfectly just and righteous, thence we likewise should labour to be such; for,

John viii. 39, 44.

Eph. v. 1.

1 Pet. i. 14.

Phil. ii. 15.

1 John iii. 2, 3.

SERM. X. *Every one,* saith St. John, *that doeth righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous:* God is perfect in all goodness; so must we endeavour to be, as our Saviour enjoineth us; *Be ye,* saith he, *therefore perfect, as your Father is perfect:* God is bountiful, gracious, and merciful unto all; we thence should learn to be so also; *I say unto you,* (they are our Saviour's lessons to us,) *Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust:* and again; *Love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest; for he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil; be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.* So are we admonished by the holy writers of our engagements to be good on this account. And reason indeed sheweth this relation to be inconsistent with our being otherwise; for similitude only can preserve cognation; things very unlike become formally different in kind and nature thereby; diversity of manners signify a difference in blood: if therefore we be closely affixed to material things, or pronely addicted to brutish pleasures, how can we be the children of him, that is purely spiritual, altogether intellectual? If we be fierce, hardhearted, unmerciful, or uncharitable, how can we claim kindred with him, who is all love and benignity, all munificence and mercy? there can be no affinity in relation, where there is such a dissimi-

1 John iii. 7.

Matt. v. 48.

Matt. v. 44.

Luke vi. 35.

Τὸ ὅμοιον ὁμοίῳ φύσει συγγενὲς ἐστι. Plat. Protag.

ude in nature: God also cannot deal with us as ildren, cannot affect or like us, if we do not re- mble him; he can only love good men, and the ost certain κριτήριον (the most perfect rule, the ost evident mark) by which we can discern or dis- ıguish what goodness is, is conformity to God's ıture, discovered by his actions; for that cannot herwise than be very good, wise and reasonable, mely and commendable, convenient and beneficial us, wherein we resemble God; God's example nnot misguide us, his law and his practice ever nsent, his will and nature cannot disagree; nothing erefore can more please him than what is like m; as even Plato could observe: *What practice,* ith he, *is acceptable and suitable to God? One; en that, which the old saying implies, Like is er a friend to like* [d]. Nothing likewise is more rtainly bad, or more displeasing to God, than that hich rendereth us in our complexion of mind, or our behaviour, unlike to God: we by being such, doing so, must necessarily fall from this high dig- ty, must *ipso facto* forfeit this excellent privilege being thus related to God; we thereby become iles and aliens from his name and family; we ove rebels and foes, instead of sons and friends, ıto him.

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3. This consideration may raise us to a just re- ırd, esteem, and valuation of ourselves; may con- quently inspire noble thoughts, and breed gene- us inclinations in us; may withdraw us from mean, ıse, and unworthy designs or practices; may ex- te and encourage us to handsome, brave, worthy

[d] Τίς πράξις φίλη, καὶ ἀκόλουθος Θεῷ; μία, καὶ ἕνα ἔχουσα ἀρχαῖον λό- , ὅτι τῷ ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὅμοιον φίλον ἂν εἴη. Plato de Leg. 4.

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resolutions and undertakings, suitable to the dignity of our nature, the nobleness of our descent, the eminency of so high a relation, of so near an alliance to God: even natural light dictateth this use of the notion, and heathen philosophers do apply it: *If any one,* saith Epictetus, *could be affected with this opinion, that we are all originally descended from God, and that God is both the Father of men and gods, he would not, I suppose, conceive any thing ignoble or mean concerning himself; If Cæsar should adopt thee, none could endure thy superciliousness; and if thou knowest that thou art God's son, shall it not elevate thy mind?* So that great philosopher discourseth. And St. Austin relateth this discourse of Varro, the most learned Roman of his time: *It is,* said he, *useful for cities, that valiant men should (although it be false) believe themselves born of the Gods, that their minds thence bearing a confidence of their Divine extraction, may more boldly undertake great enterprises, pursue them more earnestly, and hence accomplish them more happily, from the security this conceit produceth.* Shall we then, who in so many respects are so highly born, and of so illustrious an extraction, (we that are allied to God by our intelligent nature, that are by the heavenly seed of Christian regeneration more deeply implanted into his stock,) so far debase ourselves, as to affect and pursue trivial, abject, dishonourable things? Are we not ashamed of so vile a degeneracy? Can we dare so to disparage our high relations? God our heavenly Father; Christ our elder brother; the holy angels and blessed saints, our kindred in nature, our brethren in grace? Shall we not be afraid for such

Arr. Diss. i. 3.

Aug. de Civ. D. iii. 4.

unworthiness to be degraded, to be rejected, to be disinherited by our holy Father; who is jealous of his honour, who cannot brook to have his blood so stained and defiled, or that such blots and disgraces should stick to his lineage; that his image impressed on us should be so deformed and disfigured; that such disorders and misbehaviours should be committed in his family? If we do not behave ourselves as children, he hath declared that he will disavow and cast us off from being so; *Every plant,* our Saviour telleth us, *that beareth not good fruit, he loppeth it from his stock, and casteth it away.* John xv. 2, 6.

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4. This consideration is an especial motive to humility, apt to depress vain conceit and confidence in ourselves: for, if we are God's children, so as to have received our beings, all our powers and abilities, all our goods and wealth, both internal and external, both natural and spiritual, from his free disposal, so as to be continually preserved and maintained by his providence, to depend for all our subsistence upon his care and bounty; what reason can we have to assume or ascribe any thing to ourselves? How vain is it to rely upon any strength or wisdom, any possession or endowment we have, or seem to have? How extremely fond are we, if we be raised in our conceit, or are ambitious of reputation, upon the score of any such things? for, *Who,* as the apostle invincibly discourseth, *made thee to differ? what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* To him alone, who is the Author and Donor of all good things; to the Fountain of all power, all joy, all blessings; to *the Father* 1 Cor. iv. 7. Jam. i. 17. John iii. 27. 1 Chron. xxix. 14, 15.

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of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift descendeth; all praise and glory is due.

5. This consideration sheweth us the reason we have to submit entirely to the providence of God, with contentedness and acquiescence in every condition: for seeing we are *God's possessions*, (Θεοῦ κτήματα, as Plato calleth us,) he having made us whatever we are, according to all accounts and capacities, whether as men by his common providence, or as Christians by his especial grace; he surely hath the best right and title that can be upon us; he may justly dispose of us and use us as he thinks good; we may well thence be obliged, according to the apostolical precept, *to glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's*; if we repine at or complain of God's dealing with us, may he not justly return to us that answer in the gospel, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* Shall we not suffer God to order his own family according to his discretion and pleasure; to assign what station, to allow what portion he pleaseth to his own children, without our offence or displeasure? Shall we pretend to know better than he what is fit to be done? Shall we claim a right to dispense his goods, or desire to be carvers for ourselves? If it be unjust and unreasonable to do thus, then in all reason we ought to be content in every state that he disposeth us into, and to undergo patiently whatever he imposeth on us; yea we have reason to be more than content with every thing incident, not only as justly proceeding from him, but as presumable to be good and convenient for us; for is it not fit that we should think that God will order things for the best

Plat. in Phæd.

1 Cor. vi. 20.

Matt. xx. 15.

good of his own children? Can we conceive that he willingly will hurt, or will not rather help them; that he will design them any mischief, yea that he will easily suffer it? *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may,* God telleth us, *forget; yet he will not forget us:* sooner indeed may the most tender parents become unnaturally regardless, spiteful, and cruel toward their children, than the immutable God (who in his nature is unexpressibly benign and compassionate) shall neglect the good of his offspring: good reason therefore have we to be satisfied with all that befalleth us. SERM. X. Is. xlix. 15.

6. Particularly this consideration obligeth us to be patient and cheerful in the sorest afflictions, as deeming them to come from a paternal hand, inflicted with great affection and compassion, designed for, and tending to, our good: *Thou shalt,* saith God to the Israelites, *consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee:* and, *We,* saith the apostle, *have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.* The punishments inflicted on us by men may perhaps proceed from passion; but God assuredly never inflicts any thing grievous on us, but out of pure good-will: and what sweeter consolation can there be, than to know that the most cross and distasteful accidents befalling us do (according to the intention of him that bringeth them on us, and manageth them) conduce Deut. viii. 5. Heb. xii. 9, 10.

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to our profit, and shall in the event, if we do patiently receive them, and by our untowardness do not hinder their effect, prove wholesome and advantageous to us?

7. This consideration doth also shew the reason we have to obey those precepts, which enjoin us to rely upon God's providence; *to cast all our burden and care upon God; to be solicitous* and anxious about nothing which concerneth our sustenance: for children commonly (especially such as have able and kind parents) do live altogether void of care concerning their maintenance, being assured that their parents will concern themselves to provide whatever is necessary or convenient for them: and how much more have we reason to live free of solicitude in such respects, who have a Father so infinitely sufficient to supply all our wants, and so tenderly affected toward us; so ever present with us, and always vigilant over us; who cannot but see and know our needs; and can most easily satisfy them, and is no less willing and ready, if we trust in him, to do it? *Do not*, saith our Lord, *take care, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?—for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* The like reason did even natural light suggest to a philosopher: *If*, saith he, *kindred with Cæsar, or with any other great man in Rome, is sufficient to make a man live securely, without contempt, and without fear, will not the having God our Maker and Father and Guardian, free us from griefs and fears?* It is extreme infidelity concerning either the providence of God, or his power, or his goodness, (that is, the practical disbelief of

Matt. vi. 25. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 7. Ps. xxxvii. 5. lv. 23.

Matt. vi. 31, 32.

Epict. Arr. i. 9.

this point, or in our hearts disavowing God to be our Father,) which causeth all that carking and distraction of mind, that fear of wants, that grief for losses and disappointments, which do commonly possess men, together with those covetous desires and unjust practices, with which the world aboundeth: he can hardly be guilty of them, who believeth and considereth, that God doth thus stand related and affected toward him. SERM. X.

8. This consideration doth more generally in all regards serve to breed and cherish our faith, to raise our hope, to quicken our devotion: for whom shall we confide in, if not in such a Father? from whom can we expect good, if not from him, who hath already given us so much, even all that we have? to whom can we have recourse freely and cheerfully, upon any occasion, if not to him, who so kindly inviteth and calleth us to him, in so endearing terms, with so obliging an appellation? If we in any need, corporal or spiritual, request succour or supply from him, can we suspect that such a Father (so infinitely wise, so able, so good) will refuse us, or can fail us? No; *What man is there of us, that if his son ask him bread, will give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent? If we then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall your Father in heaven give good things to them that ask him?* So doth our Saviour with most convincing force of reason move us to the duty of prayer, with faith and confidence of good success. St. Luke hath it, *how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* implying, that, upon account of this relation, we may in all our spiritual needs (if Matt. vii. 9, 10, 11. Luke xi. 13.

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we do need light and direction in our doubts, or strength against temptations, or comfort in our distresses) be assured of finding requisite assistance and relief. We should therefore, upon all exigencies, address ourselves to God, not with the fear of slaves, nor with the suspicion of strangers, but with dispositions of heart suitable to children, with a reverent love, and humble confidence, and cheerful hope.

9. Lastly, considering this point will direct and prompt us how to behave ourselves towards all God's creatures, according to their respective natures and capacities: if God be the Father of all things, they are all thence in some sort our brethren, and so may claim from us a fraternal affection and demeanour answerable thereto. Shall we then scorn, abuse, trample or tyrannise over any of them? doth it become us to do so? will our common Father like it, or endure it? If we are all branches sprouting from one stock, or streams issuing from the same source of Divine beneficence and fecundity; if we are members of one body, of one commonwealth, of one family, we are then surely obliged to an universal benevolence; to be kind and compassionate, to be helpful and beneficial unto all, so far as our capacity reacheth; we are to endeavour, as we can, to preserve the order and promote the welfare of the world, and of all things in it: even upon this score the meanest of God's creatures is not to be despised, the vilest worm is not to be misused by us; since even it is the work of his hands, and the subject of his care, yea the object of his kindness, *who,* as the Psalmist telleth us, *is good unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works:* but especially toward those beings, who according to a more peculiar and

Ps. cxlv. 9. 16.

excellent sense are entitled the sons of our Father, and to whom we are more nearly allied by our better part, [d] (that Divine breath, which both they and we drew from God,) toward all intellectual beings, we do learn hence our respective duties: of love and respect toward those our elder brethren, the angels, (those of them, which have not degenerated from their nature, and apostatized from their duty;) of charity and good-will toward each other; [e] which if we do not maintain, we may consider that we thereby are first undutiful and unkind to God our common Father, and then even to ourselves; we do hate and harm both God's relations and our own (God's children, and our brethren) by hating or harming any man whatever; especially any good man, any Christian brother; who by other more peculiar bands is straitly tied to us; who upon so many better and higher accounts standeth related unto God and to ourselves [f]. Aristotle saith that all men, upon grounds of natural cognation and similitude, are naturally friends to one another [g]; much more are all good men so by participation of a more excellent nature, and by a nobler resemblance; whence it is St. Paul's precept to Christians, that they should be τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ, εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι, Rom. xii. 10.

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[d] Συγγενὲς πᾶν τὸ λογικόν. Ant. iii. 4.

Συγγενὴς, οὐχὶ αἵματος, καὶ σπέρματος τοῦ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ νοῦ, καὶ θείας ἀπομοίρας μέτοχος. Ant. ii. i.

[e] Si ab uno Deo inspirati omnes, et animati sumus, quid aliud quam fratres sumus, et quidem conjunctiores quod animis, quam qui corporibus: ergo pro belluis immanibus habendi sunt, qui hominibus nocent. *Lact.* x. 6.

[f] Ἀνδράποδον, οὐκ ἀνέξῃ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου, ὃς ἔχει Δία πρόγονον. Epict. Arr. i. 13.

[g] Οἰκεῖον ἅπας, ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ, καὶ φίλον. Arist. Eth. viii. 1.

SERM. X. that they should *bear a natural affection each to other in brotherly love:* Christians are in a more peculiar and eminent manner styled brethren; and that charity, which in respect to others is called *philanthropy*, (or humanity,) in regard to them is named *philadelphy*, (or brotherly affection:) hence to perform all fraternal offices toward every Christian, to wish heartily and earnestly to promote his good, to compassionate and, as we are able, to relieve his evils, to bear his infirmities, and to comport with unkindnesses from him, and the like duties, are incumbent on us, as peculiar to our profession.

These are the principal uses which the consideration of this point suggesteth. Now God Almighty, the great Father of all things, and especially our gracious Father in Christ Jesus, grant that by his holy grace we may perform all filial duty toward him, (rendering unto him all love and reverence, all praise and thanks, all worship and obedience, together with all faith and hope in him,) that we may behave ourselves in all things as becometh this relation, that we may resemble him in all goodness, that we may persist here continually in his favour, and obtain hereafter the blessed inheritance from him; this he of infinite mercy vouchsafe unto us, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all glory and praise. *Amen.*

Even to God the Father, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, the Author and Donor of all good; to God the Son, the Redeemer of all the world, and foundation of all spiritual blessings; to God the Holy Ghost, the fountain of all true goodness, joy, and comfort, be for ever and ever all glory and praise. Amen.

The Father Almighty,

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REV. xi. 17.

O Lord God Almighty.

'ERY attribute of God is a proper and useful ct of our consideration; as being apt to mind us ır duty, and to excite us to the practice thereof; eget in us those dispositions of mind (that love reverence toward God, that faith and hope in) which we ought to have; and to draw from eal performances of obedience to him: each of n doth ground obligations to piety, and yieldeth ıments to the practice thereof; to which purs, that considering this divine attribute, *Alhty*, (mentioned in our text,) doth much avail, that it therefore well deserveth to be pressed ı us, will appear more distinctly from the applin we shall make thereof: at present we may eive how considerable it is, by observing in s; 1. That it is frequently in holy scripture sinforth, as most proper to God; as most fully exsive of his glorious excellency and majesty; parlarly the most illuminate ministers of God's se, the seraphims in Isaiah, the four wights (or

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Isa. vi. 3.

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living creatures) in this book; and the twenty-four elders in this place, do therefore use it. 2. It is that attribute, which is alone most expressly set down in our Creed, as especially necessary to be believed and considered: we say therein, I believe in God the Father Almighty. 3. It is that with which we daily address our devotions unto God; in our prayers we say, *Almighty and most merciful Father;* in our praises we cry, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,* or (which is the same) *Lord God of Sabaoth.* It seems therefore fit and useful, that we should well understand the proper and full meaning thereof, together with the obligations grounded thereon, and the inducements it affordeth to good practice; that so when we hear it used in scripture, when we profess to believe it, when we apply it to God in our devotions, we may so reflect thereupon, as to be admonished of our duty, and moved to the performance thereof. First therefore I will endeavour somewhat to explain it; then shall make a practical application thereof.

Rev. iv. 8.

The title, epithet, or attribute παντοκράτωρ, which we (finding no other word more properly and fully to express it) do render *Almighty*, or omnipotent, is frequently in a manner peculiar and characteristical ascribed to God: the use thereof in the New Testament is, by citation or imitation, transferred from the Greek of the Old, where it serveth to express those two famous and usual names of God, *Sabaoth* and *Shaddai:* especially it answereth to the former; for the latter is only rendered thereby in some places of the Book of Job: but the former, *Sabaoth*, (when interpreted and not left in its own sound,) is constantly rendered παντοκράτωρ. I call *Sabaoth* a name of

Ὅλβιοι ἀνέρες, οἳς Σαβαὼθ νέον ἴσθλὸν ἵδωσιν. Vers. Sibyl. lib. I.

God; for that it is so, it is in several places expressly affirmed: as in Jeremiah; *Their Redeemer is strong, Jehovah Sabaoth is his name:* and in Isaiah; *For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; the Lord of hosts is his name:* and in Amos; *He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought—Jehovah Elohei Sabaoth is his name,* (from a sort of Jove, called Ζεὺς Ζαββάσιος, mentioned in some pagan writers, was, as some critics suppose, deduced.) Now as all the names and appellations of God are significant, and denote some perfection, or some prerogative belonging to him, (as *Jehovah* signifieth his self-subsistence, independency, immutability, and eternity; *Elohim* his omnipotence; *Shaddai* his all-sufficiency; *Adonai* his supreme dominion and authority,) so doth this name or title, *Sabaoth*, primitively seem to import God's universal conduct and managery of all creatures: for all things in the world, as being ranged in a goodly and convenient order, (like an army marching in array, or marshalled to battle,) are called armies, or *Sabaoth*. Thus, (after the history of the creation it is said,) *The heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them,* (πᾶς κόσμος αὐτῶν, all the furniture, or all the battalion of them:) and, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made,* saith the Psalmist, *and all the host of them:* and, *Bless the Lord all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure;* that is, all creatures which are subject to his command, and subservient to his will: and, *Lift up,* saith Isaiah, *your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things; that bringeth out their host by num-*

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Jer. l. 34. Isa. xlviii. 2. Amos iv. 13. Cicero, Aristoph. &c. Seld. de Diis S. cap. 3. Gen. ii. 1. Psal. xxxiii. 6. Ps. ciii. 21. Isa. xl. 26.

SERM. XI. *ber: he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth:* where God is represented to us as the general of an army, drawing forth and ordering his creatures, as a general summoneth to a rendezvous, mustereth and embattleth his troops: hence this title of *Sabaoth*, which is rendered παντοκράτωρ, doth seem derived.

But we need not deal so strictly, as to limit the sense of this word, according to its original rise, or its use in translation; but since it hath been authenticated by its use in the holy fountains of truth, the New Testament, and is there used so as to signify or imply the sum of Divine perfections and preeminencies; being, as it seems, selected especially for that purpose, we may presume to take it in its common latitude, for ὁ πάντων κρατῶν, or ὁ πάντων κράτος ἔχων; according to which extent, it may have various importances, somewhat different; it may accordingly denote, 1. right, or authority, over all beings, *omnipotestas;* and, 2. a power, or ability, to do all things, *omni-potentia:* 3. the actual exercise of such authority, and such power in ruling and disposing all things; *omni-potentatus:* 4. the possession of all things; or the containing and holding all things in his hand; *omni-tenentia*, (it is St. Augustine's word:) 5. the preservation or upholding of all things in their being and state: for the word κρατεῖν, according to its propriety and ordinary use, may infer and ground all these significations; and according to them all, God is truly παντοκράτωρ. Let us survey the particulars, and shew how God, especially in holy scripture, is represented in respect to them.

1. God is παντοκράτωρ, as having a just right and

authority over all things; he naturally is the sovereign Lord and Emperor of the world; for whatever imaginable reason or ground there is of authority, doth in respect to all things agree unto God. Aristotle, in his Politics, discourseth thus: Government doth aim at and tend to the mutual benefit of the governor and governed; he therefore who is most able and best disposed to provide for and procure the common benefit, is according to natural reason and justice (secluding other considerations of laws and compacts, of former constitutions, of present possession, and the like) to be the governor; or he deserves, and is fit to be so, and (no other reason hindering) becometh such, (*That*, saith the philosopher, *which naturally is apt or able to provide, doth naturally rule, and naturally lordeth:*) whence the soul hath a right to govern the body; and men naturally do rule over beasts; and were there any such persons, as did without any question very eminently exceed others in wisdom and goodness, to them, according to natural congruity, the government of others would appertain; the common advantage so requiring: and if such excellency of nature be a foundation of authority, then God, who in wisdom and goodness doth incomparably surpass all things, hath assuredly the right to govern all: so a pagan author could discourse; *There is*, saith Cicero, *nothing better than God; therefore it is necessary the world should be ruled by him*[a]: he is the *only wise*, as (St. Paul telleth us,) and thence most able; he is *only good*, (as our Saviour teacheth us,) and thence most apt to manage all things for the general

1 Tim. vi. 6.

Τὸ δυνάμενον φύσει προορᾶν, ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει.

Rom. xvi. 17. Luke xviii. 19.

[a] Nihil est præstantius Deo; ab eo igitur necesse est mundum regi. *Cic. de N. D.* 2.

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welfare and benefit of the world. If also eminency of power doth qualify for dominion, (as it surely doth; for that which cannot be withstood must in reason be submitted to; it is vain to question that authority, which by force altogether irresistible can assert and maintain itself,) God hath the only right, nothing in the world being able to contest his title;

Ps. lxxxix. 6, 8.

for, *Who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee?* says the holy Psalmist contemplating this Divine attribute: all things are weak and feeble in comparison; are altogether in his hand, and under his feet; are

Jer. x. 10.

throughly at his discretion and disposal: *The Lord,* saith the prophet, *is the true God, and the everlasting King; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his in-*

Ps. lxvi. 3. 7.

dignation: and, *How terrible,* saith the Psalmist, *art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee—He ruleth by his power for ever, his eyes behold the nations; let not the rebellious exalt themselves.*

If also to have made all things, and to preserve them, doth create a right of governing, (as it must needs do so; for what can we justly challenge a dominion over, if not over our own works, over that which we continually keep and nourish; over that which altogether depends upon us, and which subsists at our pleasure?) then well may the Apocalyptical

Rev. iv. 11.

elders thus acknowledge; *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power,* (that is, to possess the royal majesty and sovereign dominion

over the world;) *for thou hast made all things, and for thy will they are, and were created:* well might *every creature that is in the heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and those things which are in the sea, and all things in them, cry out there; To him that sitteth upon the throne (and to the Lamb) be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and* * *the dominion for ever and ever:* well might king Hezekiah say, *O Lord of hosts—thou art the God, thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth:* and the Levites in Nehemiah; *Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven and earth; the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; the earth, and all things that are therein; the sea, and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all; and all the host of heaven worshippeth thee.* Thus is God παντοκράτωρ; as he is upon all imaginable accounts, and according to all reasonable grounds of right, the rightful Sovereign of all things; as he is *Divúmque hominúmque potestas* as the wisest poet doth acknowledge and style him.

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Rev. v. 13.

* τὸ κράτος.

Is. xxxvii. 16.

Neh. ix. 6.

Virg. Æn. 19.

2. He is also such in regard to his infinite power, as that word may signify omnipotent. Natural light affordeth pregnant arguments of the greatness of his power, displayed in the constitution and conservation of the world; his disposing so stupendously vast, so unconceivably various creatures into so comely and stable a posture, whence *his eternal power and divinity are discerned,* as St. Paul telleth us; for he that could effect so much, his power must needs be far greater than we can imagine or comprehend: to natural light, I say, it is incomprehensibly great, and exceedeth all definite limits; but holy scripture

Rom. i. 20.

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more clearly and fully declareth the extent of his power; asserting, that it is not only in respect to our weak conceit and narrow capacity, but in itself truly infinite, reaching the utmost possibility of things: it teacheth us, that whatever is not contrary to his nature, or to his essential perfections, (to his goodness, fidelity, holiness, wisdom;) which it doth not misbecome him to do; or which is not repugnant to the nature of things to be done, (that is, which doth not imply a contradiction, and thereby is impossible, and becomes no object of power;) for such things *he cannot do, because he is omnipotent;* as St. Austin acutely says; he is able with perfect ease and facility to achieve it: there is among things good and possible nothing so difficult, but he can perform it; nothing so strong or stubborn, but he can subdue it: *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* said God to Abraham, when Sarah doubted, or wondered concerning the promise, that she in so extreme an age should become fruitful: *Behold,* said the prophet Jeremiah in his prayer, *thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and thy stretched out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee:* οὐκ ἀδυνατήσει Θεῷ πᾶν ῥῆμα· *Nothing* (that can be said, or conceived, or performed) *shall be impossible to God,* if he pleaseth to design or undertake it, said the angel to the blessed Virgin, when he delivered so strange a message to her concerning an event so wonderful and supernatural, as our Saviour's conception of her: that a rich man should be induced entirely to comply with God's will, and willingly to part with all, our Saviour affirmed exceedingly difficult, (hardly any thing could be supposed more difficult; harder it was, than *for a camel to pass through*

Deus propterea quædam non potest, quia omnipotens est. *Aug. de Civ. D.* v. 10.

Gen. xviii. 14.

Jer. xxxii. 17, 27.

Luke i. 37.

the eye of a needle;) but to satisfy his disciples' scruple thence arising, he subjoins; *With men* (or according to the common sense of men) *this is impossible, but to God all things are possible: In thine hand,* said king Jehoshaphat, *there is power, and might, so that none is able to withstand thee:* and king Nebuchadnezzar having felt an experiment of his power, and being returned to a right understanding, confesseth thus; *He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? The Lord of hosts,* saith the prophet, *hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* To stop the sun in his career, to make the sea stand upon an heap, to draw streams of water from a rock, to restrain fire from burning, to restore the blind and lame, to raise the dead, to suspend, thwart, invert the course of nature, with all such things which we so wonder at, and term miracles, are comparatively but slender, and, as it were, perfunctory instances of his power; for with the greatest ease, by the least exertion of his power, by a thought, a look, a touch, a word, the greatest things are performed: *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke: He overturneth the mountains in his anger, and shaketh the earth out of her place: The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof.* These seem great and strange effects of power; yet in respect to what he can do, and hath done, they are small; for he at first made the whole world with a word; so the history of the creation expresseth it, and so the Psalmist telleth us;

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Matt. xix. 26. 2 Chr. xx. 6. Dan. iv. 35. Is. xiv. 27. Psal. xviii. 7, 8. Job ix. 5. xxvi. 11.

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By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth; and by a word he doth preserve it, *upholding*, as the apostle to the Hebrews speaketh, *all things by the word of his power*, or by his powerful word; and by a word he can destroy and annihilate all things; yea more easily, in a manner, he can do it, even by his mere silence, or by withdrawing that salutary breath, by virtue of which all things subsist; *Thou hidest thy face*, saith the Psalmist, *they are troubled; thou withholdest thy breath, they die, and return to their dust.* For we may consider, that in this respect also God is all-powerful, as being the source from which all power is derived, by which all power is sustained, upon which all power doth depend; he not only can do all things inclusively, but exclusively, or so that nothing can be done without him: that of our Saviour, *Without me ye can do nothing*, is not only true in spiritual, but in all other matters: *He*, as St. Paul preached at Athens, *giveth life* (or being, with all vital faculties) *and breath*, (that is, all natural powers) *and all things unto all: In him* (or rather, by him) *we live, and move, and have our being;* that is, whatever we are, whatever we have, whatever we can do, doth proceed from him, doth depend upon him. Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, as all-powerful.

Psal. xxxiii. 6, 9. Heb. i. 3. Ps. civ. 28. Job xxxiv. 14, 20. John xv. 5. Acts xvii. 24, 28.

3. God is also so, by reason that he doth actually exercise all dominion, and doth exert his power continually, according to his good pleasure: he not only hath a just title to govern all things, and a perfect ability to sway in all matters, but he constantly useth them: *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all: God is the*

Psal. ciii. 19. Psal. xlvii. 7, 8.

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King of all the earth; God reigneth over the heathen, (or the nations;) *God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness: the Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens: Who is like unto the Lord our God, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth?* It is indeed, as the holy man saith, a great condescension in God, that he will vouchsafe to have the inspection and administration of things so much inferior to him; yet for the common good of his creatures he is pleased to do it; *Thine,* saith king David, *O Lord, is the kingdom, and thou art exalted as head above all; both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; in thine hand is power and might,* &c. He is indeed the only Governor, absolutely, originally, and independently so; ὁ μόνος δυνάστης, *the only Potentate,* as St. Paul calleth him; all authority and power are imparted by him, and subordinate to him; from his disposal and direction all potentates do receive them; in his name and behalf, by virtue of his commission and command, as his delegates and ministers, for his honour, interest, and service, they administer any just dominion or power. It was Nebuchadnezzar's doom to be driven from men, until he did understand and embrace this truth, so necessary for all governors to know and consider; that, *The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will;* that, *His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him: Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south: but God is the Judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another: There is no power but from God; the powers that are, are*

Psal. cxiii. 4.

1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12.

1 Tim. vi. 15.

Dan. iv. 25. ii. 21. vii. 27.

Psal. lxxv. 6, 7. Rom. xiii. 1.

John xix. 11

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appointed by God: The judgment is God's, (as Moses said in his charge to the judges of Israel,) being exercised by his order, and in his behalf. Thus

Rev. xix. 16. Deut. x. 17. Ps. cxxxvi. 3.

is God παντοκράτωρ, *as the only absolute* sovereign Lord, the Author and Fountain of all just authority, *the Lord of lords, and King of kings,* as the scripture often doth style him.

4. God is also παντοκράτωρ, as the true proprietary and just possessor of all things. *Blessed be Abraham,* said king Melchizedek, *of the most high God,*

Gen. xiv. 19. Deut. x. 14. Psal. xxiv. 1. l. 12. Ps. lxxxix. 11. Ps. xcv. 5.

possessor of heaven and earth: and, *Behold,* said Moses to his people, *the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God; the earth also, with all that is therein:* and, *The earth,* saith the Psalmist, *is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; for he hath founded it upon the seas, and prepared it upon the floods:* and, *The heavens,* saith he again, *are thine, the earth also is thine; as for the world, and the fulness thereof,* (that is, all which the world contains, all with which it is furnished and replenished,) *thou hast founded them:* and, *The sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land.* All things, they say, are the goods and possessions of God; proving it from hence, that he made them, and thereby acquired a propriety in them: for there is no more evident and perfect ground of propriety than this. The products of our invention and care, the fruits of our endeavour and industry, even we do think that reasonably we may call our own, and justly claim the enjoyment of: how much more he, that by an original, uncommunicated, independent wisdom and power, hath contrived and produced all things! From thence

surely doth result such a title to them all, that the entire and absolute disposal of them doth appertain to him; so that he may apply them, as the potter doth the vessels which he maketh, (it is the scripture comparison,) to what use he thinketh good; that he may freely place and bestow them where he pleaseth; that he may take them away, or transfer them, when he seeth fit: they can never be so alienated from him, that the enjoyment of them doth not wholly depend on him, and that at pleasure (his wisdom and goodness permitting, his truth and word being solved) he may not resume them to himself.

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Isa. xlv. 9. lxiv. 8. x. 15. Jer. xviii. 6. Rom. ix. 21.

5. God is also παντοκράτωρ, as containing and comprehending all things by his immense presence and infinite capacity: it is a name which the Jewish doctors commonly apply to God, *hamakom*, the place, because all things do subsist in him; he being, as St. Hierome speaks, *infused through all things, and circumfused about all things; so as to penetrate them within, and to contain them without;* so as to be *within all things not included, and without all things not excluded:* and, *We do not*, saith Minutius Felix, *only live in the eye, but in the bosom of God*[b]. The whole world, how vast soever it seemeth to our narrow conceit, is but as a drop, or as an atom of dust, in his hand: *Behold*, saith the prophet elegantly and truly, *the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the isles*

המקום

Isa. xl. 15, 17. xlviii. 13. xl. 12.

[b] In omnibus infusus, et circumfusus, ut cuncta penetret interior, et contineat exterior. *Hier. ad Marcell.* 5.

Intra omnia nec inclusus, extra omnia nec exclusus.

Non solum in oculis Dei, sed in sinu vivimus. *Minut. F.*

Solus est omnia; opus suum et extra, et intra tenet. *Sen. Præf. Nat. Q.*

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as a very little thing; all nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity: and, *I fill heaven and earth,* saith God in Jeremiah: and king Solomon in his prayer saith more; *Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee:* and, *Whither,* saith the Psalmist, *shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there: if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me,*

Jer. xxiii. 24. 1 Kings viii. 27. Ps. cxxxix. 7, &c.

Col. i. 17. Heb. i. 3.

6. Lastly, God is παντοκράτωρ in regard that he sustains and preserves all things. *When,* saith St. Gregory Nyssen, *we hear the word* παντοκράτωρ, *we understand this, that God containeth all things in being*[c]: *Thou,* say the Levites in Nehemiah, *even thou, art God alone; thou hast made heaven and earth, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth, and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*

Neh. ix. 6.

In all these respects and senses doth the title παντοκράτωρ (which we for want of a word more adequate and expressive, do render *Almighty*) belong to God: the Greek word, in the latitude of its signification, according to its etymology, comprehendeth all these senses, and the design in its use, as we before touched, warranteth the taking it in the largest acception; but however it certainly respecteth the former senses, denoting the absolute univer-

[c] Ὅταν τῆς παντοκράτωρ φωνῆς ἀκούομεν, τοῦτο νοοῦμεν, τὰ πάντα τὸν Θεὸν ἐν τῷ εἶναι συνέχειν. Greg. Nyss.

sal sovereignty and the immense, irresistible power of God: the belief and consideration of which particulars is of great importance, and may have a very useful influence upon our practice: for, SERM. XI.

I. If God be the just Sovereign of all things, having a right to govern the world, and actually exercising it; then,

1. We see our condition and state here in this world. We live not in an anarchy, or in perfect liberty; we are not our own masters, or have a right to guide our actions according to our own will, or after our own fancy; but are under government; a government most absolute and arbitrary; the laws whereof we may not dispute, the proceedings whereof we cannot resist. Whence, Τραχὺς μὸναρχος, καὶ οὐκ ὑπεύθυνος κρατεῖ. Æsch.

2. We understand our duty; that as subjects and vassals we are obliged to render all awful reverence, worship, and obedience to God; humbly to adore the majesty, readily to perform the commands, and patiently to submit to the will of our great Sovereign; to conform all our actions to that heavenly law, under which we are born and live in the world. *We do not,* even Plutarch could tell us, *come hither into life to make laws, but to obey those which are appointed by God, who ordereth all things; to observe the decrees of Destiny and Providence*[d].

3. Hence we may discern the heinousness of every sin, or transgression of God's law; it receiving great aggravation hence. It hence appeareth not only a matter of simple folly, or private inconvenience, (contrary to our reason,) but of public mischief and

[d] Οὐ γὰρ νομοθετήσαντες πάρεσμεν εἰς τὸν βίον, ἀλλὰ πεισόμενοι τοῖς διατεταγμένοις ὑπὸ τῶν τὰ ὅλα πρυτανευόντων θεῶν, καὶ τοῖς τῆς εἱμαρμένης, καὶ προνοίας θεσμοῖς. Plut. Consul. ad Apol.

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general ill consequence; being committed against the crown and dignity of God Almighty; against the peace and order of the world; which subsist by the observation of his laws. Every sin is an act of high rebellion, a breach of our natural allegiance, *a lifting up ourselves*, as is said of Belshazzar, *against* our Sovereign; an infringing that right, and violating that honour of his, which he by his place and office is concerned to maintain and vindicate.

Num. xv. 30. Dan. v. 20.

4. We may hence learn what reason we have to be content in every condition, and to undergo patiently every event befalling us: for that our station is allotted to us by an unquestionable right, and all things are dispensed to us by a common law, from which nothing can be exempted; for that things come not by a blind necessity or chance, but are disposed and managed by sovereign reason and wisdom. *We must*, saith an Ethnic philosopher, *not be displeased at any of these things; for we are come into that world, where we must live by these laws:* and, *A good man must needs be granted to be highly pious toward God; he therefore will sustain all accidents with equanimity; as knowing them to happen unto him by a divine law, by which all things proceed*[e]. It were indeed intolerable arrogance and frowardness in us to desire an exemption from that common law, to which all things are subject; to wish ourselves out of that order, in

[e] Nihil horum indignandum est; in eum intravimus mundum, in quo his legibus vivitur. *Sen. Ep.* 91.

Virum bonum concedas necesse est summæ pietatis erga Deos esse; itaque quicquid illi acciderit, æquo animo sustinebit, scit enim id accidisse legè divina, qua universa procedunt. *Sen. Ep.* 76.

which the all-guiding Providence hath set us; to be dissatisfied with any thing, which by the Supreme Wisdom is assigned to us: it becometh us to say with old Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good;* to say upon all occasions with David; *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.* Upon this consideration we should not only be satisfied with, and acquiesce in, but praise and adore all occurrences of Providence, how unkindly soever and distasteful they appear to us; supposing a just and reasonable cause to lie under them, although indiscernible to us[f]. Yea further,

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1 Sam. iii. 18.

Psal. xxxix. 9.

5. It is a matter of great consolation to reflect, that we and all the world are under such a government; it is a common felicity, it is our particular happiness, that we are so; for it is no unjust usurper, it is no merciless tyrant, it is no fond, no weak, no careless person that we are in subjection to, but a most just, most mild, most gracious, most wise, most powerful, most vigilant Lord; who will deal most equally and most benignly with us; who sincerely and earnestly tenders our welfare; who is watchful and careful for our good; who is able to provide for all our needs, and to protect us from all mischief; all whose laws do only aim at our benefit; all whose proceedings toward us are full of equity, goodness, and truth; who will not only favourably accept, but most bountifully recompense our obedience; whom to serve and obey is a privilege far better and more desirable for us, than to be free, than to be wholly at our own disposal, and under

[f] Πάντα θαυμάζειν, πάντα ἐπαινεῖν, πάντα ἀνεξετάστως ἀποδέχεσθαι τὰ τῆς προνοίας ἔργα, κἂν φαίνεται πολλοῖς ἄδικα, διὰ τὸ ἄγνωστον εἶναι, καὶ ἀκατάληπτον τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν πρόνοιαν. Damasc. de O. F. ii. 29.

SERM. XI. our own guidance; the very nature and the end of his government being only to preserve us, and to
Deut. x. 12. rescue us from the errors, the slaveries, the vexations and miseries we are apt to incur; by virtue of whose universal dominion we are secured, that no malice of devil, no unjustice of men, no sort of enemy whatever, (excepting our own wilful disobedience to his laws and directions,) shall be able to do us harm; for all them he governs and he curbs no less than ourselves. Of this our King it is truly said, that
Ps. lxxxix. 14. *justice and judgment are the establishment of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face;* that,
Ps. cxlv. 17. *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his*
Rev. xv. 3.
Psal. xlv. 6. *doings;* that, *The sceptre of his kingdom is a right*
Matt. xi. 30. *sceptre;* that, *His yoke is easy, and his burden light.* In confidence of his protection we may say
Psal. xxvii. 1, 2. with the Psalmist, *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?*
Ps. xlvi. 1, 2. *God is our refuge and strength—therefore will I not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.*
Ps. lvi. 4. *In God have I put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.* Well therefore may we, may the whole world, in consideration of our being under so good a Governor, be excited to joy and jubilation
Psal. xlvii. 1, 2. with the Psalmist; *O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph: for the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great*
Ps. xcvi. 10. *King over all the earth. Say among the nations, that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established, that it shall not be moved; he shall judge the people righteously; let the heavens re-*
Ps. xcviii. 8. *joice, and let the earth be glad,* &c. *Let the floods*

clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together be- SERM.
fore the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: XI.
with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity. Or with those in the Revelation; *Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent* Rev xix. 6.
reigneth; let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour unto him. All the world hath exceeding reason not only to be content, but to rejoice and triumph in being subject to such a Governor, so able, so willing to maintain peace, good order, and equity therein: so that we also are obliged to bless and thank God, that he condescends so far, and vouchsafes to undertake the tuition and oversight of the world; obeying the Psalmist's exhortation; *The Lord,* saith Psal. ciii.
he, *hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his* 19.
kingdom ruleth over all: therefore, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels—Bless the Lord, all his hosts—Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion;* imitating herein those elders in the Revelation; Rev. xi. 17.
who say, *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken unto thee thy great power, and hast reigned.* They who imagine the world is not governed at all, but that with unloosed reins it runneth on at random, are very foolish: but more such are they, who wish it to be so, and in their desires depose God from his throne; for they do wish for anarchy and confusion in their country, instead of the most excellent establishment and order, maintained by the wisest and ablest government. That good emperor was better advised, and better affected, who said, *What good were it for me to live in a world void of a Deity and Providence?* and, *Why should I desire to continue in such a casual jumble*

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and rout of things[g]? The world, he well supposed, Divine governance being excluded, would be a strange, disorderly, and uncomfortable place to abide in. And old Socrates, in the *Phædon*, discoursing about his departure hence, comforts himself in that, as he hoped, he was going thither, where the gods did preside with a nearer inspection and a more apparent influence. These were worthy desires and noble hopes proceeding from natural reason and moral virtue in such persons; but much more reason and much greater obligation have we to be satisfied with, and to comfort ourselves in the assurance, that all things, even at present, here are moderated by a superintendency far more equal and more propitious than they could imagine or hope. These and such like practical uses the belief and consideration of God's sovereign authority and dominion do afford: the belief and consideration of God's immense and uncontrollable power is also of very great importance and influence upon practice.

1. It serveth to beget in us a due awe and dread of God: considering God's other attributes may breed in us a high esteem and hearty love of God; but the consideration of his power is that which naturally and reasonably produceth a great fear of him: he is most amiable for his goodness, and in regard to his wisdom greatly venerable; but his power, arming the rest, renders him exceedingly terrible. *Hear ye this*, it is said in the prophet Jeremiah, *O foolish people, and without understanding; Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my*

Jer. v. 21, 22.

[g] Τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κενῷ θεῶν, ἢ προνοίας κενῷ; Ant. ii. §. 11.
Τί καὶ ἐπιθυμῶ εἰκαίῳ συγκρίματι, καὶ φυρμῷ τοιούτῳ ἐνδιατρίβειν; Idem vi. §. 10.

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presence, which hath placed the sand for the bounds of the sea? &c. and, *Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might: who would not fear thee, O thou King of nations?* and, *I will shew you,* saith our Saviour, *whom ye should fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed* (or who beside killing) *hath power to cast into hell; I say unto you, Fear him:* great reason he had so earnestly to inculcate that admonition, the case being so apparent and so important.

Jer. x. 6, 7.

Luke xii. 5. Μετὰ τὸ ἀποκτεῖναι.

2. This point doth consequently in high measure dissuade and deter us from sin, implying the extreme folly in committing it, and the inevitable mischief following it. The consideration of God's other attributes infer it to be great baseness and stupidity to oppose or displease God, but the consideration of this demonstrateth it to be infinite madness to do so. For to wrong, dishonour, and displease him, that is so good and beneficent to us, is great disingenuity and unworthiness; to swerve from his advice and direction, who is only and perfectly wise, is highly vain and unreasonable; but for so feeble and impotent things as we are to contest with and withstand, to provoke and offend Omnipotency, (that which with infinite ease can defeat and subdue us, can depress us into misery, can crush us into nothing,) is most palpably the top of insolent wildness. It is Moses's argument, whereby he presseth obedience to his law; *Circumcise therefore,* saith he, *the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked; for the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, and a mighty, and a terrible.* It is no less an evidently convincing, than a vehemently affecting increpation,

Deut. x. 16, 17.

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1 Cor. x. 22. Job xl. 9.

Job xv. 25.

tell us; the same which the prophet says; *Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!* Nothing indeed can be more reasonable, than that advice of the Preacher; *Contend not with him that is mightier than thou:* which in this case in effect is the same with this; Do not, by sinning, offend or provoke God. SERM. XI. Isa. xlv. 9. x. 5.

3. Whence likewise the consideration of this point may dispose us to weigh our counsels, and thereupon not to adventure upon any unwarrantable resolution or design; there being so apparent reason to despair of success, an insuperable power being always ready to obstruct and cross us in the carriage of such designs, with whatever cunning laid, or backed with whatever might; for hence those sayings in scripture are manifestly verified: *There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord:* and, *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper:* and, *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered?* Isa. xlv. 23. Isa. liv. 17. Job iv. 9. Num. xiv. 41. Psal. lxvi. 3, 7.

4. It also likewise serveth to depress in us all confidence in ourselves, and in all other things, as to any security in them or succour from them: for all things in the world, though they conspire and combine together all their forces, will be altogether unable to support us, to assist us, to defend us against the Divine power, or indeed without it; they being all, otherwise than as maintained by him, infinitely feeble and frail: *Though hand join in hand,* (that is, notwithstanding the conjunction of all powers whatever,) *the wicked shall not be unpunished,* saith the Wise Man: and, *I kill,* saith God, *and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any thing that can deliver out of my hand:* and, Prov. xi. 21. xvi. 5. Deut. xxxii. 39. Job x. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 6.

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No king is saved by the multitude of an host; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength; a horse is a vain thing for safety.

Psal. xxxiii. 16. cxlvi. 3. Isa. xxxvi. 6.

5. It therefore also may be of a special efficacy to quell and mortify in us the vices of pride, haughtiness, arrogance, self-will, stubbornness, and contumacy; since contemplating the power of God we cannot but perceive ourselves to be very pitiful, impotent, and insignificant things; who without permission cannot effect any thing; who cannot expect in any case to have our will; who have continually curbs in our mouths, and manacles on our hands; so that we cannot say or do any thing, cannot so much as stir, or endeavour any thing, without check or control; being under a predominant force, *which always resisteth the proud;* under the power of him who hath said, *The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down;* whose character and peculiar work it is to *behold every one that is proud, and to abase him; to cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and to lay low the haughtiness of the terrible;* to *break the high arm,* and *to bring down the high looks;* and to *stain the pride of all glory.* Whence there is all the reason in the world that we should obey St. Peter's injunction, to *humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.*

Prov. iii. 34. Isa. ii. 11. xiii. 11. xxiv. 21. x. 2. Job xl. 11, 12. xxxviii. 15. Psal. xviii. 27. Isa. xxiii. 9. 1 Pet. v. 6.

6. The consideration of God's omnipotence serveth to breed and nourish faith in God, as to the certain performance of his word and promises: for let the accomplishment of them be to appearance never so difficult or improbable, yet he is able to perform them, and will therefore do it. *The Strength of Israel,* as Samuel said, *will not lie, nor repent:* and,

1 Sam. xv. 29.

Hath he said it, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken it, and shall he not make it good? said Balaam, inspiredly: and, *The Lord of hosts,* saith Isaiah, *hath purposed it, and who shall disannul it? His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* and, *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I will also do it:* and, *My word that goeth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; it shall prosper unto the thing whereunto I sent it:* and, *The counsel of the Lord,* saith the Psalmist, *standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations: Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him; for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast:* and, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.* So doth God assert his immutable fidelity, and considering his indefectible power doth assure us that we may rely upon his word; and the doing so is very grateful and acceptable to God; for it was that virtue for which Abraham is so highly commended and so richly rewarded: *He did not,* saith St. Paul of him, *stagger at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform:* to do otherwise is very displeasing and offensive to God; for we do thereby either doubt of his veracity, so, as St. John saith, *making him a liar;* or we disbelieve his power, and make him impotent in our conceit; which to do is high injury to God, and detestable sacrilege. Hence also,

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Num. xxiii. 19. Isa. xiv. 27. Isa. xlvi. 10, 11. Isa. lv. 11. Psal. xxxiii. 11, 8. Isa. xl. 8. Mark xiii. 31. Job xxiii. 13. Prov. xix. 21. Jer. iv. 28. Rom. iv. 20, 21. 1 John v. 10.

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7. Particularly this consideration may produce and cherish our faith in the sufficiency of God's providence, and may induce us entirely to rely upon it. For if God be omnipotent, then is he easily able to supply us in all our needs, to relieve us in all our straits, to protect us from all danger and mischief; and being able, he will not fail to do it, since his goodness also disposeth him thereto, and his word engageth him; he having declared himself to be the patron, protector, and benefactor of the needy; he having promised to help, relieve, and comfort those who seek and cry unto him. Distrust in God's providence is always grounded either in the disbelief of God's goodness or of his power; either in supposing him to be unwilling or unable to do us good; and that is commonly grounded on the latter, the Israelites' constant behaviour in the wilderness (representing the ordinary conversation of men in this world) doth inform us; who conceived their needs greater, than that God was able to supply them; their enemies stronger, than that by God's assistance they could withstand or subdue them; the obstacles to their proceedings such, that God himself could not carry them through them; for, as the Psalmist representeth their behaviour and discourse, *They spake against God, saying, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?* and that from their conceiting God unable to convey them through all dangers and difficulties, to render them victorious over the tall men and the fenced cities of Canaan, they, notwithstanding God's presence with them, and ready aid, de-

Psal. cxlv. cxlvi. cxlvii, &c.

Psal. lxxviii. 19, 20.

ponded in heart, and murmured, and provoked God, SERM.
nd in consequence of such misbehaviour forfeited XI.
btaining the rest propounded to them, many pas- Deut. i. 28.
ages in the story do shew us. We in practice do Num. xiv. 9.
ommonly follow them, notwithstanding the many Heb. iii. 18.
xperiments of God's wonderful power and goodness,
requently suspecting that God cannot supply our
ecessities or satisfy our desires; whence we are
ither overborne with anxiety, and become discon-
olate, or have recourse for succour and relief to
ther aids; deserting God, as the prophet intimates,
hen he (withal declaring the offence God taketh at
uch miscarriages, with the guilt and mischief we
hereby incur) pronounceth thus: *Cursed be the* Jer. xvii. 5, 6.
nan that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his
rm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord;
or he shall be like the heath in the desert, and
hall not see when good cometh, &c. Whence our
aviour took it ill of his disciples, and rebuked them,
hen even in the most imminent and affrighting
angers they gave place to fear or doubt; as when
n a great tempest, *the ship being even covered* Matt. viii.
ith waves, they being afraid, cried out, Lord save 24, 25, 26.
s, we perish; he said unto them, Τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλι-
όπιστοι; *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?*
And when St. Peter, walking upon waves, and be-
inning to sink, his heart misgiving, in like manner
ried out, *Lord save me;* our Lord also reproves Matt. xiv.
im with an Ὀλιγόπιστε, τί ἐδίστασας; *O thou of little* 30, 31.
aith, why didst thou doubt? Whence we both learn,
hat it is our want or weakness of faith which makes
s in our greatest needs ready to sink, and that it
s not excusable for us in the extremity of danger
o doubt of God's protection and succour. Further,

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8. This consideration affordeth comfort and encouragement unto us in the undertaking and prosecution of honest and prudent enterprises, giving us to hope confidently for success, how difficult or dangerous soever it appear unto us; all difficulties and improbabilities vanishing before that Omnipotency which abetteth and backeth such endeavours; the which is by faith imparted and appropriated unto us; so that we, with St. Paul, *are able to do all things by God strengthening us.* Nothing is so high or difficult (if just and reasonable) which a resolute faith in the Divine power cannot easily surmount and achieve: a word, seconded therewith, can transplant trees, and transfer mountains any whither: *If ye,* saith our Lord, *have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed hence to yonder place, and it shall be removed: Ye may say to this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the roots, and be thou planted in the sea, and it shall obey you;* καὶ οὐδὲν ἀδυνατήσει ὑμῖν, *and there is nothing,* adds our Saviour, *which shall be impossible unto you;* for, as he saith again, *All things are possible to him that believeth;* that is, unto him who relieth upon the Divine power; for that the faith he speaks of refereth thither, appeareth by several like passages in the gospel; as for instance in that, where to the blind men imploring his relief our Lord puts this question: *Do ye believe that I can do this?* and they answering, *Yes, Lord;* he thereupon replies, *According to your faith be it done unto you.* In contemplation of this power, we may, if our duty or good reason do call us forth, how small or weak soever in ourselves, how destitute soever of defensive arms or

Phil. iv. 13.

Matt. xvii. 20. Luke x. 19. xvii. 6. Mark xi. 23.

Mark ix. 23.

Matt. ix. 28.

offensive weapons, naked and unarmed, *with a sling and a stone*, go out against the biggest and best-armed Philistine, nothing doubtful of victory; it will be enough, if we can say with David, *I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of hosts*; that is, confiding in his powerful help, as my invincible weapon and defence. But so much for this particular. SERM. XI. 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

III. That notion of the word *Almighty*, which implieth God's being universal proprietary and possessor of all things, hath likewise many good uses; we shall only name them, without enlarging upon them: we thence learn,

1. That we ourselves are not our own, and therefore ought to submit ourselves with content and patience to God's disposal; for that, as it is in the gospel, God may *do what he pleaseth with his own.* Whence also we are bound, as St. Paul enjoineth us, *to glorify God with our bodies and spirits, which are God's.* Matt. xx. 15. 1 Cor. vi. 20.

2. That also therefore we ought to be content with that portion of accommodations here which God alloweth us; for that since every thing is his, we can claim nothing to ourselves; all we have doth proceed from mere liberality and bounty.

3. The same reason obligeth us to be satisfied, whenever Providence withdraweth what it did afford us the enjoyment of; for God doth never so communicate any thing, as to divest himself of the paramount title and propriety therein; all things have an immutable relation to him as Lord, and cannot be alienated from him; whence he may justly, when he pleaseth, recall or resume them into his hand. Job i. 21.

4. Yea, hence we are obliged to be heartily thank-

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ful for all we ever have or enjoy; for that nothing is upon any account ours, or can be due to us from him; all proceeding from pure kindness and goodness.

5. We are hence obliged carefully to manage and employ all which is put into our hands for his interest and service; as honest tenants and faithful stewards, making just returns and improvements; not embezzling nor abusing any of his goods committed to us.

6. Lastly, we may learn hence to be humble and sober; not to be conceited or elevated in mind, or apt to glory, in regard to any thing we have; since we have nothing that we can justly esteem or properly call our own.

IV. That sense, according to which the word doth signify God's containing all things by his immense presence, is also of most excellent use and influence upon our practice. We thereby may learn with what care and circumspection, with what reverence and modesty, with what innocence and integrity, we ought always, and in all places, to manage our conversation and behaviour; since we continually do think, and speak, and act in the immediate presence and under the inspection of God; whose *eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings;* who *searcheth and trieth our hearts,* and *possesseth our reins;* who *encompasseth our path,* and *is acquainted with all our ways;* to whose *eyes all things are naked and dissected;* according to the significant and emphatical expressions of scripture. Did we stand in the sight of our king, we should not dare to behave ourselves rudely and indecently; were a virtuous person conscious of our doings, we

Job xxxiv. 21. Ps. cxxxix. 3, 13, &c. Jer. xvii. 10. Heb. iv. 13. Ps. xc. 8. Prov. xx. 27.

should be ashamed to do any base or filthy thing; the oversight of a grave or a wise person would restrain us from practising vanities and impertinencies: how much more should the glorious majesty of the most wise and holy God, being ever present to all our thoughts, words, and actions, if duly considered and reflected upon, keep us within awe and compass! how can we, if we remember that we abide always in a temple sanctified by God's presence, not contain ourselves in a careful and devout posture of soul[h]! SERM. XI.

This consideration also prompteth us to frequent addresses of prayer, thanksgiving, and all kind of adoration toward God: for all reason dictateth it to be unseemly to be in his presence with our back turned unto him, without demonstrations of regard and reverence to him, without answering him when he speaketh to us; that is, without corresponding to the invitations which he frequently by his providence maketh to us, of conversing with him, of seeking his favour, and imploring his help, and returning thanks for his mercies.

V. Lastly, the consideration that God doth uphold all things, and consequently ourselves, in being, may upon several good accounts be influential upon our practice; particularly it may powerfully deter us from offending and displeasing him; for put case our life, our livelihood, all the conveniences and comforts of our being, should wholly depend upon the bounty and pleasure of any person, should we not be very wary and fearful to affront, or injure, or displease such a person? It is in the highest de-

[h] Πᾶς οὖν καὶ τόπος ἱερὸς τῷ ὄντι, ἐν ᾧ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν Θεοῦ λαμβάνομεν, καὶ χρόνος. Clem. Alex. p. 520. vid. p. 517.

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gree so with us in respect to God; and why are we so inconsiderate, that the same reason hath not the same effect upon us?

This consideration also should mind us how infinitely we are obliged to the goodness of God, who when he may by the bare withdrawing his conservative influence utterly destroy us, and suffer us to fall to nothing, doth, notwithstanding our many provocations, the many neglects and injuries he receiveth from us, continually preserve us in his hand, and every moment imparteth a new being to us. For which, and all his infinite mercies and favours toward us, let us for ever yield unto him all thanks and praise. *Amen.*

SERMON XII.

Acts iv. 24.

O Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.

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IT may be demanded, why besides that of *Almighty*, no other attribute of God is expressed in our Creed? why, for instance, the perfections of *infinite wisdom* and *goodness* are therein omitted? I answer,

1. That all such perfections are included in the notion of a God, whom when we profess to believe, we consequently do ascribe them to him (implicitly.) For he that should profess to believe in God, not acknowledging those perfections, would be inconsistent and contradictious to himself: *Deum negaret*, as Tertullian speaks, *auferendo quod Dei est*; He would deny God by withdrawing what belongs to God. Adv. Marc. cap. 3.

2. The title παντοκράτωρ, as implying God's universal providence in the preservation and government of the world, doth also involve or infer all Divine perfections displayed therein; all that glorious majesty and excellency, for which he is with highest respect to be honoured and worshipped by us, which added to the name of God doth determine what God

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we mean, such as doth in all perfection excel, and with it doth govern the world.

3. I may add, thirdly, That the doctrine of God's universal providence being not altogether so evident to natural light as those attributes discovered in the making of the world, (more having doubted thereof, and disputed against it with much more plausibility,) it was therefore convenient to add it, as a matter of faith clearly and fully (as we did shew) attested unto by Divine revelation. So much may suffice to remove such a scruple concerning the fulness and sufficiency of the Creed in that particular. I proceed;

Maker of Heaven and Earth.

This clause is one of those which was of later times inserted into the Creed; none of the most ancient expositors thereof (Austin, Ruffin, Maximus Taurinensis, Chrysologus, &c.) taking any notice thereof. But Irenæus, Tertullian, and other most ancient writers, in their rules of faith, exhibit their sense thereof, and the Confessions of all general councils (the Nicene, and those after it) express it. And there is great reason for it; not only thereby to disavow and decry those prodigious errors of Marcion, Manichæus, and other such heretics, which did then ascribe the creation of the world (or of some part thereof, seeming to their fancy less good and perfect) to another *God*, or *Principle*, inferior in worth and goodness to that God which was revealed in the gospel; or did opinionate two Principles, (not distinct only, but contrary one to the other;) from one whereof good things did proceed, from the other bad things were derived: but for that the creation of the world (which the holy con-

fessors of Christ do here in the text ascribe unto God) is that peculiarly august and admirable work, by which we learn that he is, and in good measure what he is; by which, I say, the existence of God is most strongly demonstrated, and in which his Divine perfections are most conspicuously displayed; which is the prime foundation of his authority over the world, and consequently the chief ground of all natural religion; of our just subjection, our reasonable duty, our humble devotion toward him: the title, *Creator of heaven and earth*, is that also, which most especially characterizes and distinguishes the God whom we believe and adore, from all false and fictitious deities; for, as the Psalmist sings, *All the gods of the nations are but idols, but the Lord made the heavens:* and, *Thou*, prayeth Hezekiah, *art the God, thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou hast made heaven and earth:* and, *The gods*, saith the prophet Jeremiah, *that have not made the heavens and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens:* and, *We preach unto you*, said St. Paul to the ignorant Lycaonians, *that ye should turn from those vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth.* It is therefore a point, which worthily hath been inserted into all creeds, and confessions of our faith, as a necessary object of our belief; and it is indeed a subject no less wholesome and fruitful, than high and noble; deserving that we employ our best thoughts and most careful attention upon it: to the commemoration thereof God consecrated the great sabbatical festivity among his ancient people; nor should even the consideration of the great work concerning our redemption abolish

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Ps. xcvi. 5.

2 Kings xix. 15, 19.

Jer. x. 11.

Acts xiv. 15. xvii. 24.

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the remembrance of it: to confer some advantage thereto, we shall now so discourse thereon, as first to propound some observations explicative thereof, and conducing to our information about it, then to apply the consideration thereof to practice.

We may first observe, that the ancient Hebrews, having, as it seems, in their language no one word properly signifying the world, or universal frame and complex of things created, (that system, as the author *de Mundo* defines it, *consisting of heaven and earth, and the natures contained in them,*) did for to express it use a collection of its chief parts, (chief absolutely in themselves, or such in respect to us,) *the heaven*, and *the earth*, adding sometimes, because of the word *earth* its ambiguity, the *sea* also: yea sometimes, for fuller explication, subjoining to *heaven* its *host*, to *earth* its *fulness*, to the *sea* its *contents*. So, *In six days the Lord made heaven and earth*, saith Moses: and, *Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord*, (in Jeremiah:) and, *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail*, saith our Saviour: and, *God*, saith St. Paul, *who made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth*; (where the *world and all things therein* do signify the same with *heaven and earth*; he first uses the word (*world*) which the Greek language afforded, then adds the circumlocution, whereby the Hebrews did express it.) By heaven and earth therefore we are, I say, to understand those two regions, superior and inferior, into which the whole system of things is divided, together with all the beings that do reside in them, or do belong unto them, or are comprehended by them; as we

σύστημα ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ γῆς, καὶ τῶν ἐν τούτοις περιεχομένων φύσεων. de M. 2. Lips. Phys. St. ii. 7.

Gen. i. 1.

Jer. xxiii. 24.

Luke xvi. 17.

Acts xvii. 24.

Ps. lxix. 34. Neh. ix. 6. Exod. xx. 11. 2 Kings xix. 15. Isa. xlii. 5.

see fully expressed in our text, and otherwhere; particularly with utmost distinction by the angel in the Apocalypse: who swears *by him that liveth for ever, who created the heaven, and the things that are therein, and the earth, with the things that therein are, and the sea, with the things therein.* SERM. XII. Rev. x. 6.

By *heaven* then is understood all the superior region encompassing the globe of earth, and from it on all sides extended to a distance unconceivably vast and spacious, with all its parts, and furniture, and inhabitants; not only such things in it as are visible and material, but also those which are immaterial and invisible; so we are plainly taught by St. Paul: *By him*, saith he, *were created all things, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, both those that are visible, and those that are invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him:* that is, not only the material and sensible parts, or contents of heaven, (those bright and beautiful lamps exposed to our view, with the fluid matter, in which they may be conceived to float or swim,) but those beings of a more pure and refined substance, and thence indiscernible to our sense, however eminent in nature, mighty in power, exalted in dignity, whose ordinary residence and *proper habitation* (their ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, as St. Jude termeth it) is in those superior regions; in that they are courtiers and domestic officers of God, (whose throne, and special presence, or the place where he more peculiarly and amply discovereth himself, and displayeth his glory, is in heaven,) attending upon him, and ministering to him; *encircling his throne*, (as it is in the Revelation,) and *always* (as our Saviour tell- Col. i. 16. Jude 6. Heb. i. 14. Dan. vii. 10. Ps. ciii. 21. Rev. v. 11. Matt. xviii. 10.

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eth us) *beholding his face;* even these all were made by God: the time indeed when, and the manner how those invisible sublime creatures were made, is not in the history of the creation, or otherwhere manifestly expressed, (because perhaps it doth exceed the capacity, or doth not suit the condition of man to understand them; or because it doth not much concern us, or not much conduceth to our edification to know them:) but that they were made by God, and that when we call God the *Maker of heaven*, they are comprehended, as the creatures of God, dwelling there, is evidently declared in scripture[a]; for beside the fore-mentioned clear and full place of St. Paul,

Rev. x. 6. the angel forecited in the Revelation saith, that God *created the heaven, καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, and the things in*

Mark xii. 25. xiii. 32. &c. *it;* and in our text, it is said that God *made heaven and all things in it,* (*πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ,*) which plainly includeth the angels; if all things in it, then surely the angels, who are often expressed to be in heaven, being indeed the principal and most considerable

Neh. ix. 6. things therein. And, *Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host,* (pray the Levites in Nehemiah,) where, according to the Jews' notion, who say there are three heavens; *Cœlum nubiferum,* or the firmament; *Cœlum astriferum,* the (starry) heavens; *Cœlum angeliferum,* or the heaven of heavens; where the angels reside, (the third

2 Cor. xii. heaven in St. Paul;) by the hosts of heaven, are

[a] The Greek Fathers commonly (and St. Hierome after them) conceived they were made before the creation of this material world: St. Austin thinks them meant under *Fiat lux. De Civ. Dei,* xi. 9.

Διὰ τὸ τοῖς εἰσαγομένοις ἔτι καὶ νηπίοις κατὰ τὴν γνῶσιν ἀνεπιτήδειον. Bas. Hex. 1.

Φῶτα δεύτερα τοῦ πρώτου φωτὸς ἀπαυγάσματα. Naz. Orat. 43.

meant the angels: as also the hosts of God do seem to signify in the 103d Psalm; where it is said, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word; Bless ye the Lord, all his hosts, ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.* Whence they are termed *the sons of God;* as where in Job it is said, *There was a day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord;* and in several other places: and St. Jude telleth us of the lapsed angels, that they did not retain τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχὴν, *their beginning*, or primitive state; wherefore they had a beginning, and whence could they have that, but from God; who alone is eternal, (*who alone* originally, intrinsecally, and necessarily, *hath*, as St. Paul saith, *immortality;* and consequently alone, (as Aristotle by several arguments proveth against Plato,) hath eternity.) The angels also are subject to God's jurisdiction and governance, which argueth their proceeding from him, and dependence upon him: in fine, the Psalmist reckons them among the works of God; for having said, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels;* and, *Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts;* he recapitulating and concluding subjoins, *Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion:* and again, in the 148th Psalm, summoning all the creation to a consort of doxology, he begins with the heavens, then proceeds to the earth, making a very particular recitation of the chief parts and inhabitants belonging to each; and in the first place mentioning the angels, then the stars, then the heaven of heavens, he subjoineth the reason why they ought all to praise God: *Let them*, saith he, *praise the name of the Lord; for he commanded, and they were created; he hath also*

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Psal. ciii. 20, 21.

Job ii. 1. xxxviii. 7. Ps. lxxxix. 6. xxix. 1.

Jude 6.

1 Tim. vi. 16. Arist. de Cœlo, i. cap. ult.

Psal. ciii. 20, &c.

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established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree, which shall not pass. Thus we are by Divine revelation instructed concerning the existence and original of those heavenly invisible beings, to the knowledge of whom, that they are, what they are, whence they are, natural light could not reach; although from the relics of primitive tradition even the pagans themselves commonly in part did acknowledge this truth, calling all the inferior or secondary gods, whom they conceived to converse together happily (ἐν τῷ ἀνωτάτῳ τόπῳ) in the highest place above, as Aristotle saith, in subjection to God, and attendance on him, the children of the Supreme God: Plato calls God, Πατέρα καὶ Δημιουργὸν, the *Father and Framer* of them all, according (as he avoweth himself) to ancient tradition. And thus concerning those beings piety doth oblige us to believe and profess that God is their Maker, it especially conducing to his glory to believe, that he is the Author of their sublime natures, and Donor of those excellent properties, with which they are endowed, and wherein they so far surpass all other beings.

Arist. de Cœlo, i. 3. Polit. i. 1.

Plato in Tim.

As for all other things both in heaven and earth, the material frame of the visible world, with all its parts compacted together in so fair, so fit, so firm and stable an order, they (as we have sometime sufficiently discoursed) even to natural understanding speak themselves to have been produced by a most wise, most powerful, most beneficent author, that is, by God; the which is confirmed by innumerable testimonies of holy writ, so evident and obvious, that we need not to cite them: and to thus much the generality of mankind hath always consented; as also the most and best reputed philosophers did in

general terms avow it, acknowledging God the Author and Builder of the world. SERM. XII.

But there is one particular, wherein they seem unanimously to have dissented from what Christian piety inclines us to acknowledge, as most suitable to the divine perfection and majesty; which concerns the origin of that *matter*, of which corporeal things do subsist. For even Plato himself, who so positively doth assert the world to have been framed by God, is yet conceived (I speak so dubiously, because his writings about this point are somewhat obscure, and, as Justin Martyr proves, inconsistent with themselves) to suppose the matter of things to be eternal; he ascribing only to God the forming and disposing it into a good order, answerable to some patterns preexistent in his wise understanding; [b] even as a good artist doth out of an unshapen lump of stuff frame a handsome piece of work, conformable to some *idea* (or image) preconceived in his fancy: so that he represents God, rather as a Builder out of prepared materials, than as a Creator of the world. *Socrates and Plato*, saith Plutarch, *did suppose three principles of things, God, matter, idea: God is the mind; Matter the first subject of generation and corruption; Idea an incorporeal subsistence in the conceptions of God.* Anaxagoras also, as the same author (and Aristotle before him) telleth us,

Tim. p. 1058. Just. Mart. Cohort. 1. ad. Græc. p. 8.

Plut. de Placitis, i. 3.

[b] Ut igitur faber, cum quid ædificaturus est, non ipse facit materiam, sed ea utitur, quæ sit parata, fictorque item cera; sic isti providentiæ divinæ materiam præsto esse oportuit, non quam ipse faceret, sed quam haberet paratam. *Cic. apud Lact.* ii. pag. 180.

Quibus oculis intueri potuit vester Plato fabricam illam tanti operis; qua construi a Deo, atque ædificari mundum facit? *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* &c.

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did assert two principles[c]; the one *passive*, the *matter*, consisting of an infinite number of small particles like to one another in shape; the other *active, understanding*, which ranged those troops of little bodies into order: to the same effects Pythagoras his conceits, though expressed with much obscurity, are reduced. Thales his opinion was in effect the same, who, as Cicero telleth us, *said, that water was the principle of things, and God that mind which fashioned all things out of water*[d]. The Stoics also were of the same opinion: *It seems to them*, saith Laertius in Zeno's Life, *that there are two principles of all things, the agent, and the patient; that the patient is the matter void of qualities, but the agent, reason which is therein, that is, God*[e]. Tertullian against Hermogenes saith, that *he did take from the Stoics to place matter with God; which matter did always exist, being neither born nor made, and nowise having either beginning or end, out of which afterward the Lord made all things*[f]: and, *Come now*, saith the same Father in his book against the Valentinians, *let the Pythagoreans learn, let the Stoics acknowledge,*

[c] Ἀναξαγόρας τε γὰρ μηχανῇ χρῆται τῷ νῷ πρὸς κοσμοποιΐαν. Arist. Met. i. 4.

[d] Thales aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem esse mentem, quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret. *De N. D.* 1.

[e] Δοκεῖ δὲ αὐτοῖς ἀρχὰς εἶναι τῶν ὅλων δύο· τὸ ποιοῦν καὶ τὸ πάσχον· τὸ μὲν οὖν πάσχον εἶναι τὴν ἄποιον ὕλην· τὸ δὲ ποιοῦν τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ Λόγον τὸν Θεόν. Laert. in Zen.

Lips. in Phys. Sen. Ep. 65.

[f] Sumpsit a Stoicis materiam cum Domino ponere, quæ et ipsa semper fuerit neque nata, neque facta, nec initium habens omnino, nec finem, ex quo Dominus omnia postea fecerit. *Tertul. in Hermog.* 1.

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and even Plato himself, whence matter, whom they would have unmade, did draw its both origin and substance toward all this structure of the world[g]. Yea, Aristotle tells us, that generally all natural philosophers before him did conceive, and did assume it for a principle, that nothing was made out of nothing, or that every thing produced had necessarily some preexistent matter, out of which it was produced: *It is*, saith he, *the common opinion of naturalists, that nothing can be made out of nothing;* and, *That it is impossible, that any thing should proceed from nothing, all that have studied about nature do consent*[h]: which principle Aristotle himself not only admits, but extends further, affirming it impossible that any thing should be produced out of matter not predisposed to admit the form which is to be produced; οὐδὲ γίνεται ὅτι οὖν ἐξ ὅτου οὖν, *Neither can*, saith he, *every thing be made of every thing, but out of some subject fitted thereto,* (or susceptive thereof,) *as animals, and plants out of their seed*[i]. Which principles deduced from the observing natural effects, or works of art performed always by alterations, additions, subtractions, or trans- Phys. i. 9.

[g] Age nunc, discant Pythagorici, agnoscant Stoici, Plato ipse, unde materia, quam innatam volunt et originem et substantiam traxerit in omnem hanc struem mundi. *Adv. Valent.* 15.

Vid. Athenag. Leg. pag. 19.

[h] Κοινὴ δόξα τῶν φυσικῶν οὐδὲν γίγνεσθαι ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος—Τὸ γιγνόμενον ἐκ τῶν μὴ ὄντων γίγνεσθαι ἀδύνατον, περὶ γὰρ ταύτης ὁμογνωμονοῦσι τῆς δόξης πάντες οἱ περὶ φύσεως. Phys. i. 4. 8.

Vid. de Gener. et Corrup. i. 3. et Metaph. i. 1, 3.

[i] Ἀεὶ ἐστί τι ὁ ὑπόκειται, ἐξ οὗ γίγνεται τὸ γιγνόμενον, οἷον τὰ φυτὰ, καὶ τὰ ζῶα ἐκ σπέρματος. Phys. i. 8.

Erit aliquid quod aut ex nihilo oriatur, aut in nihilum subito occidat; quis hoc physicus dixit unquam? *Cic. de Divin.* 2.

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positions of some matter subjacent, we may safely, in respect only to such kinds of effects, proceeding in the ordinary course of nature, admit; allowing no natural agent, no created artificer, sufficient to produce any thing without some matter or subject aptly qualified and prepared to receive its influence; but from hence to conclude universally, that every action possible doth require a matter preexistent, or a predisposed subject, is nowise reasonable: because such a thing doth not usually according to the course of nature happen; because there is no cause obvious that can perform so much; because we are not acquainted with the manner of way of doing such a thing, that therefore the thing is in itself absolutely impossible, is no warrantable argumentation: no logic will allow us from particular experiments to establish general conclusions, especially such as do concern the determination of what is absolutely impossible; that must be fetched from abstracted notions of reason, not from singular appearances to sense: there may be, for all that we (we pitifully shortsighted creatures in this our dark state) can by any means know, agents of another sort, and powers in manner of efficacy much differing from all those which come within the narrow compass of our observation. Especially to imagine, that the Supreme Being, who made the world in a manner, whatever that manner were, incomprehensible, cannot himself act otherwise than we see these inferior things (not only infinitely lower in degree, but wholly different in nature) do act, is grossly vain and unreasonable: *It is impossible*, saith St. Chrysostom well, *for man's nature by curious inquiry to penetrate the workmanship of God.* From sense or experience then

Ἀδύνατον τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ δημιουργίαν

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such conclusions cannot well be derived; it assures us that some effects are possible, but cannot help us to determine what is impossible. Neither are there any certain principles of reason, from whence it may be collected, that it is impossible, that some substances should be totally produced *de novo*, or receive completely an existence, which they had not before: that no such principles are innate to our minds, (if indeed there be at all any innate principles, which some philosophers deny,) every man's experience can tell him: neither do these philosophers allege any such; nor (as we before shewed) can any such be drawn from experience. If they say, the proposition is αὐτόπιστος, or evidently credible of itself, without any proof, it is a precarious and groundless assertion; such as ought not to be admitted in any science, or any disceptation; except they can shew that the terms of these propositions, (or of the like equivalent ones,) A substance is producible altogether *de novo;* A substance may exist, which did not exist; Something may be produced out of nothing; do involve a contradiction; which it rather is evident they do not, there being nothing contained in the notion of substance inconsistent with such a producibility, or with novity of existence, no more than there is in the notion of figure or of motion, which things no man hardly denies to receive a new existence. In fine, nothing is more reasonable than to confess, that our reason can nowise reach the extent of all powers and all possibilities; and that we much, as St. Chrysostom speaks, do transgress our measures and bounds, if we pretend to know what things God is able to produce, or how he doth produce any: *His works*, as Lactantius speaketh, *are*

περιεργάζεσθαι. Chrys. in Gen. λογ. β'.

Ὑπερβαίνειν οἰκεῖον μέτρον. Chrys.

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seen with eyes; but how he made them, the mind itself cannot see[k]. Those opinions therefore of the ancient philosophers, that the matter of the world (or of natural things) was eternal and necessarily preexistent, and that there could be no creation out of nothing, were assumed altogether without any clear or sure foundation. We may say unto them, as our Lord did once say to the Sadducees, *Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. The poverty* and narrowness *of man's natural understanding*, (not going usually beyond matters obvious to sense,) *and their inability, by the meanness of their reason, to look up to the height of truth, did*, as St. Basil says, *deceive them*[l]. And that these opinions (revived and embraced by divers persons in our days) are false, and contrary to our faith, that in truth all the *matter* of things both could be, and really was, created by God, may from several reasons appear.

Matt. xxii. 29.

1. It is often in general terms affirmed in scripture, that God did make all things; all things in heaven and earth. Now it is unsafe, and never, without urgent reason allowable, to make limitations or restrictions of universal propositions, especially of such as are frequently and constantly thus set down: and, like as St. Paul somewhere discourses, because it is said in the prophets, *Every one that believeth in*

Rom. x. 11, &c.

[k] —hoc est modum conditionis suæ transgredi, nec intelligere quousque homini liceat accedere. *Lact.*

Opera ipsius videntur oculis, quomodo autem illa fecerit, ne mente quidem videtur. *Lact.* 2.

[l] Ἐξηπάτησεν αὐτοὺς τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἡ πενία—οὐ δυνηθέντες διὰ λογισμῶν ταπεινότητα πρὸς τὸ ὕψος ἀπιδεῖν τῆς ἀληθείας. Bas. Hexaem. Hom. β'.

him shall not be ashamed; and, *Whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved;* therefore both Jews and Greeks, in case of their belief and invocation of God, are capable of acceptance and salvation; οὐ γάρ ἐστι διαστολή, for that there is no distinction or exception made: so it being said universally and unlimitedly, that all things were made, and no reason appearing which compels to restrain that universality, therefore the matter of things was also made; the matter being one thing, yea in the opinion of most philosophers, as well ancient as modern, the principal thing, the only substantial thing in nature; all other things being only modes, affections, or relations thereof. Whence Aristotle telleth us, that most of the first philosophers did affirm nothing at all really to be made, and nothing ever to be destroyed; because matter did always subsist and abide the same, as if no other thing beside in nature had any being considerable. If God therefore did not produce matter itself, he could hardly be accounted author of any thing in nature, so far would he be from being truly affirmed the maker of all things: upon this ground Cicero, as Lactantius cites him, denied that God was the author of any of the elements: *It is not probable,* said he, *that the matter, whence all things did arise, was made by divine Providence;* and, *If matter was not made by God, then neither earth, nor water, nor air, nor fire, were made by him* [m]; to invert which discourse, we

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Arist. Phys. i. 8. Metaph. i. 3.

[m] Primum igitur non est probabile eam materiam rerum unde orta sunt omnia, esse divina Providentia effectam, sed habere et habuisse vim et naturam suam:—Quod si non est a Deo materia facta, ne terra quidem, et aqua, et aër, et ignis a Deo factus est. *Cic. apud Lactant.* ii. pag. 150.

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say, that God did make all these things, (earth, sea, fire, and air,) as the holy scripture frequently asserts, wherefore the matter of them was also his work: he was not only, as St. Basil speaks, *an inventor of figures*, (or a raiser of motions,) *but the maker of nature itself* [n]; and of all that is substantial therein.

2. Again, God is in scripture affirmed to be the true proprietary and possessor of all things, none excepted; how so, if he did not make them? for *he that did not make, cannot*, as Justin Martyr argues, *have any right to that which is not made* [o]. It is the argument by which the scripture frequently proves God to be the owner and disposer of things, because he made them: *The earth*, saith the Psalmist, *is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein: for he hath founded it upon the seas, and prepared it upon the floods.* So, because (we may say) he did produce matter, and doth sustain its being; therefore he, by the most excellent sort, and upon the best ground of right, doth own it, and may justly use it at his pleasure; otherwise might we not say with Tertullian, *If God did not make matter, he using a thing not his own, because not made by him, either he used it precariously, as needing it, or injuriously, as usurping upon it by force* [p].

Ps. xxiv. 1. Gen. xiv. 19. Deut. x. 14.

3. The supposing any thing to be eternal, uncre-

[n] Ὁ Θεὸς——οὐχὶ σχημάτων ἐστιν εὑρετὴς, ἀλλ' αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως τῶν ὄντων δημιουργός. Bas. Hex. β'.

[o] Τῷ γὰρ μὴ πεποιηκότι οὐδεμία ἐξουσία πρὸς τὸ μὴ γεγονός. Just. M. Cohort. ad Gr. i. p. 22.

[p] —de alieno usus aut precario usus est, qua egens ejus, aut injuria, qua prævalens ejus. *Tert. adv. Hermog.* 9.

ated, and independent upon God, doth advance that being in those respects unto an equality with God, imparting thereto so great and divine attributes: *It will become*, as St. Basil saith, *God's peer, or equal in dignity, being dignified with the same privileges.* That supposition likewise in effect depriveth God of those special perfections, independency and all-sufficiency; making him in his operations and performances to depend upon, and to be in a manner subject unto, matter; to need its concourse, and to be unable to perform any thing further than it admits: for, *None*, as Tertullian discourseth, *is free from needing that, whose stock he useth; none is exempt from subjection to that, which he needs that he may use; and none who lends of his own to use, is not in this superior to him to whom he lends it for use*[q]. The very doubting about this made Seneca put such absurd and impious questions as these: *How God's power is limited? whether he effects whatever he pleaseth, or is disappointed by want of matter? whether he doth not form many things ill, not from defect of art in himself, but from disobedience of the subject-matter*[r]? Which questions we easily resolve by saying, nothing is impossible to God; his will can never be crossed or disappointed; he can never do

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Ὁμότιμος ἵστασθαι τῷ τῶν αὐτῶν ἀξιοῦσθαι ἀξίαν ἀξιουμένῳ.

[q] Nemo non eget eo, de cujus utitur; nemo non subjicitur ei, cujus eget ut possit uti; et nemo qui præstat de suo uti, non in hoc superior est eo, cui præstat uti. *Tert. adv. Herm.* iv. 5.

[r] Quantum Deus possit; materiam ipse sibi formet; an data utatur; utrum idea materiæ prius superveniat, an materia ideæ; Deus quicquid vult efficiat, an in multis rebus illum tractanda destituant; et a magno artifice prave formentur multa, non quia cessat ars, sed quia id in quo exercetur sæpe inobsequens arti est. *Sen. Præf. Nat. Qu.*

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any thing bad, or imperfect in its kind; because he createth matter itself answerable to his design.

4. As Aristotle well discoursed against the ancient philosophers, who, before Anaxagoras, did assign but one principle of things, a material and passive one, as if no active principle were required; so may we argue against him and them together. If God did produce and insert an active principle into nature, (as who can imagine those admirable works of nature, the seminal propagation and nutrition of plants, and however more especially the generation, motion, sense, fancy, appetite, passion of animals, to be accomplished by a mere passive agitation of matter, without some active principle distinct from matter, which disposeth and determineth it to the production of such effects?) if God could, I say, produce and insert such an active principle, (such an ἐντελέχεια, as the philosopher calleth it,) why might he not as well produce a passive one, such as the matter is? what greater difficulty could he find in doing it?

5. Yea further, if God hath produced immaterial beings, or simple and uncompounded substances distinct from matter, such as angels and the souls of men, merely out of nothing, (for out of what preexistent stuff could they be made?) then may he as well create matter out of nothing; for what greater difficulty can we conceive in creating so much lower and more imperfect a thing, than in creating those more excellent substances, so much fuller, as it were, of entity, or so far more removed from nothing? If any one thing is producible out of nothing, why may not all things capable of existence be so produced by a competent and omnipotent virtue? *Why not,*

as Tertullian argued, *all things out of nothing, if any thing out of nothing; except if the divine virtue, which drew somewhat out of nothing, was insufficient to produce all things thence*[s]? But that such immaterial substances were produced by God, we before, from many plain testimonies of Divine revelation, did shew: and particularly the souls of men are produced from God's breath, or by the efficacy of his word. SERM. XII.

6. The manner of God's making the world, expressed in scripture, by mere will and command, (*He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast; he commanded, and they were created,*) that only by uttering the word *fiat,* (not audibly, but mentally, that is, by an act of volition,) all things should be formed and constituted in their specifical natures and perfections, doth argue, that matter, or any other thing possible, might easily by the divine power be produced out of nothing. Likewise effecting miracles superior or contrary to the law and course of nature, without any preparatory dispositions induced into the suscipient matter, in the same manner, by mere willing, saying, or commanding, whereof there be in the scripture frequent instances, doth persuade the same; θέλω, καθαρίσθητι, *I will; be thou cleansed: Woman, great is thy faith,* γενηθήτω σοι, ὡς θέλεις· *be it to thee, as thou desirest:* Νεανίσκε, σοὶ λέγω, ἐγέρθητι, *Young man, I say to thee, Wake,* from the sleep of death: so did our Saviour speak, and the effect immediately followed; whereby, as he demonstrated his divine power, so he Ps. xxxiii. 9. cxlviii. 5. Luke v 13. Matt. xv. 28. Luke vii. 14.

[s] Cur non omnia ex nihilo, si aliquid ex nihilo; nisi si insufficiens fuit divina virtus omnibus producendis, quæ aliquid protulerit ex nihilo? *Tertull. adv. Herm.* 15.

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declared the manner, whereby divine power doth incomprehensibly operate in the production of things; and that it therein nowise dependeth upon matter: for it is nowise harder or more impossible to produce matter itself, than to produce a form therein without or against an aptitude to receive it: nay, it seemeth more difficult *to raise children unto Abraham out of stones*, than to draw them out of nothing; there being a positive obstacle to be removed, here no apparent resistance; there as well somewhat preceding to be destroyed, as somewhat new to be produced, here only somewhat simply to be produced: especially considering, as we said, that God useth no other means, instruments, or applications in these productions, than his bare word or command; which there is no reason why we should not conceive as able immediately to make the matter, as to produce the forms of things.

Matt. iii. 9.

7. Lastly, The holy text, describing the manner and order of the creation, doth insinuate this truth. *The scripture*, saith Tertullian well, *doth first pronounce the earth to be made, then setteth out its quality; as likewise first professing the heaven made, it in the sequel doth superinduce its disposition*[t]. *In the beginning*, saith Moses, *God made heaven and earth; now the earth was without form;* that is, it seems, God at first did make the matter of heaven and earth devoid of all form and order, a confused and unshapen mass; then he di-

[t] Scriptura terram primo factam edicit, dehinc qualitatem ipsius edisserit; sicut et cœlum primo factum professa dehinc dispositionem ejus superinduxit. *Tertull. contra Hermog.* 26.

Τὴν ὕλην προυνοστήσας εἰδοποίησεν ὕστερον, ἑκάστῳ τάξιν καὶ σχῆμα, καὶ μέγεθος περιθείς. Greg. Naz. Orat. 43.

gested and distinguished the parts of them, by several steps, orderly raising thence all those various kinds, and well arrayed hosts of goodly creatures: first he made the stones and timber, and all requisite materials, then did he rear and frame this stately fabric. So the words do sound, and may well be understood. SERM. XII.

From these premises we may conclude against those philosophers, who, destitute of the light of revelation, did conceit otherwise, and against those Christians who have followed the philosophers, (as Hermogenes of old, and Volkelius of late, together with the sectators of their opinions,) that God did create, (in the most strict and scholastical sense of that word, did create,) that is, either immediately or mediately did produce out of nothing, or did bestow entirely a new existence unto every thing, which is, not excepting any one; and that is the sense of the words, having *made heaven and earth;* or of the title, *Maker of heaven and earth,* ascribed unto God.

Which title as all sober Christians have always acknowledged, and the holy oracles do most plainly avouch, due to the one true God alone, (for, *to us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things,*) so there were divers heretics of old, Marcion and others of the Gnostic crew, who contradicted it; affirming, that the God of the Old Testament, who made the world and enacted the ancient law, whom Moses and the Prophets did declare, was not the same God with him from whom the gospel proceeded, and who is preached therein; the Mosaic God being a worse conditioned God, fierce and rigid, angry and implacable, delighting in wars and mis- 1 Cor. viii. 6.

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chiefs; but the evangelical God, the Father of our Lord, being mild and gentle; void of all wrath and spleen; very indulgent and beneficent [u]. Of kin to that fancy of Marcion, was the error of the Manichees, who supposed two first causes of things; from one whereof good, from the other evil, did fatally proceed; which conceit, it seems, they drew from the Persian, Egyptian, or other ethnical doctrines; the which we have recited by Plutarch in his discourse about Isis and Osiris; *The Persian magi*, said he, *had their Oromazes and Arimanius; the Egyptians, their Osiris and Typhon; the Chaldeans, their good and bad planets; the Greeks, their Zeus and Hades; the Pythagoreans, their Monas and Dyas; Empedocles, his Concord and Discord* [x], &c. The like report we have in divers other writers: the common reason, or ground, upon which these erroneous conceits were built, was this; there appearing to be in nature some things imperfect, and some things bad, (as ill dispositions, inclinations, and passions of mind; ill tempers and

[u] Prædicat hic duos esse Patres, divisaque regna:
Esse mali causam Dominum qui condidit orbem;
Quique figuravit carnem spiramine vivam;
Quique dedit legem, et vatum qui voce locutus;
Hunc negat esse bonum, justum tamen esse fatetur,
Crudelem, durum, belli cui sæva voluptas,
Judicio horrendum, precibus mansuescere nullis:
Esse alium suadens, nulli qui cognitus unquam;
Hunc ait esse bonum, nullum qui judicat æque,
Sed spargit cunctis vitam, non invidet ulli.

Adv. Marc. Poëm. 1.

[x] Plut. de Iside et Osiride. Aug. de Civ. Dei, xx. 5. cum Lud. Vive. Laertius in procemio. Plato de Leg. x. Eusebius de Præp. 24. Arist. Metaph. iv. 1. Simplic. in Epict.

diseases of body, attended with pains and troubles in life; vices, discords, deformities, antipathies, irregularities, monsters, poisons, and the like things dispersed in nature,) this sort of things they supposed could not proceed from perfect goodness, the fountain of what was good, lovely, orderly, convenient, pleasant, and desirable: *If* (discourseth Plutarch, expressing the main of their argument) *nothing can naturally arise without a cause, and good cannot afford causality to evil, it is necessary that nature should have a proper seed and principle of evil as well as good: and thus it seems to the most and wisest; for they indeed conceive two gods as it were counterplotting each other; one the contriver and producer of good things, and the other of bad; calling the better one God; the other, Dæmon*[y]. But this discourse hath two faulty suppositions: it supposeth some things to be imperfect and evil, which are not truly such; and to those things, which are truly such, it assigneth an imaginary and wrong cause. SERM. XII.

1. It supposeth some beings according to their original nature and constitution to be evil and imperfect; which supposition is, I say, false; for there is no sort of creature which did not at first pass the Divine approbation: *God saw every thing which he had made, and behold it was very good:* good, that is, convenient and suitable to its design, (or its Author's idea,) fair and decent in its place, according to its proportion; very good, that is, perfect and complete in its degree, without any defect, blemish, Gen. i. 31.

[y] Εἰ γὰρ οὐθὲν ἀναιτίως πέφυκε γενέσθαι, ἀρκίαν δὲ κακοῦ τ' ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἂν παράσχοι, δεῖ γένεσιν ἰδίαν καὶ ἀρχὴν ὥσπερ ἀγαθοῦ, καὶ κακοῦ τὴν φύσιν, &c. Plut. de Is. et Osir.

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or flaw; not liable to any reasonable blame or exception. [z] There are indeed among the creatures some degrees of perfection, (it was fit there should be so in great variety, that things might by comparison illustrate and commend one another; that there might be regular subordinations, and subserviencies, and harmonies; that several faculties of intelligent creatures might be exercised, and improved, and delighted; that the πολυποίκιλος σοφία, *the manifold*, or multiform, *wisdom* of the Creator might be displayed, acknowledged, and celebrated; there are, I say, for such purposes in nature creatures gradually different in excellency,) whence some things may be said comparatively imperfect, or rather less excellent and noble in respect to other things, endued with higher faculties, or (as they be sometimes called) perfections of nature; some things are less active and more passive than others; are not so capable of enjoyments delectable unto, and more subject to impressions distasteful to, their particular nature; which passivities and displeasures are not simply wills, because they do suit the degree of the particular natures of those subjects, being also ever overbalanced with other pleasing activities and enjoyments: so have things different measures of excellency; but nothing, as it comes from God's hand, or stands in its rank in nature, is positively imperfect, or void of that perfection which is due to its kind; much less is any creature absolutely bad, that is, ugly, or noxious, or troublesome, or cumbersome to the universe; so that it were better away

[z] Naturæ omnes quoniam sunt, et ideo habent modum suum, speciem suam, et quandam secum pacem suam, profecto bonæ sunt. *Aug. de Civ. Dei.* xii.

out of it, than in it. *God*, saith the Hebrew Wise Man, *created all things, that they might have their being, and the generations of the world were healthful, and there is no poison of destruction in them.* Every thing contributes somewhat to the use and benefit, or to the beauty and ornament of the whole: no weed grows out of the earth, no insect creeps upon the ground, which hath not its elegancy, and yields not its profit; nothing is abominable or despicable, though all things are not alike amiable and admirable: there is therefore nothing in all the compass of nature unfit or unworthy to have proceeded from God; nothing which he beseemingly, without derogation to his excellencies, may not own for his work; nothing which in its rank and degree doth not confer to the manifestation of his glorious power, admirable wisdom, and excellent goodness: *O Lord*, (cried the devout Psalmist upon particular survey and consideration of them,) *how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.* That which we call poison, is such only relatively, being noxious or destructive to one part, but innocent, wholesome, and useful to some other part; and never prejudicial to the whole body of things: yea, even to that part itself it is commonly beneficial in some case or season; affording, if not continual alimony, yet sometime physic thereto, and serving to expel another poison or mischief more imminently dangerous. [a] That which we call a monster, is not unnatural in regard to the whole contexture

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Ps. civ. 24.

[a] Ἔστι τὸ τέρας τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τι· παρὰ φύσιν δ' οὐ πᾶσαν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολύ· παρὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀεὶ, καὶ τὴν ἐξ ἀνάγκης οὐδὲν γίνεται παρὰ φύσιν. Arist. de Gen. Anim. 4.

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of causes, but ariseth no less methodically, than any thing most ordinary; and it also hath its good end and use, well serving to illustrate the beauty and convenience of nature's usual course. As for pain and grief incident to the natures of things, without regard to any demerit or justice, they are not properly evils, but adherences to the less perfect natures of things; [b] in a state liable to which God not only justly, but wisely, according to his pleasure, might constitute things, for the reasons and ends before insinuated; for no reason obliged him to confer upon every thing extreme perfection; he might dispense his liberalities in what kind and measure he thought good. In fine, the reason of offence we take at any thing of this kind, seeming bad or ugly to us, ariseth from our defect of knowledge and sagacity, we not being able to discern the particular tendency of each thing to the common utility and benefit of the world [c].

2. But as for those real imperfections and evils, truly so called, (*which* alone, as St. Basil speaketh, *are properly evil, and most worthy of the appellation of evils*[d],) habitual distempers of soul, and irregular actions; errors, and vices, and sins; we need not search for any one eternal or primitive cause of them: although order, uniformity, beauty, and per-

[b] Τῆς τοῦ ὅλου δημιουργίας, ὥσπερ τινὲς ἑπόμεναι, καὶ ἀναγκαίαι φύσεις. Max. Tyr. 25.

[c] Divina nos admonet providentia non res insipienter vituperare, sed utilitatem rerum diligenter inquirere, et ubi nostrum ingenium vel infirmitas deficit, ibi credere occulta, &c.; atque hæc ipsa aut humilitatis exercitatio est, aut elationis attritio. *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, ii. 22.

[d] Τὰ κυρίως κακὰ, ἅπερ μάλιστά εἰσι τῆς τῶν κακῶν προσηγορίας ἄξια. Bas. in Orat. Quod Deus non est author mali.

fection do, yet disorder, confusion, deformity, and defect do not, argue any unity of cause, whence they should spring; the true causes of them are sufficiently notorious; not the will or power of a Creator, but the wilfulness and impotency of creatures are the fountains of them. They are no substantial beings, and so do not need an infinite power to create them; they do hardly need a positive cause; being themselves rather defects, than effects; privations of being, than positive beings: *Let no man*, saith St. Austin, *seek an efficient cause of a bad will; for there is no efficient, but a deficient thereof; for that itself is not an effection, but a defection*[e]: and, *An evil will*, saith he again, *is the efficient cause of an ill work; an evil will hath no cause*[f]; that is, none beside itself, or its own deficiency. And again; *Evil hath no nature, but the loss of good hath received the name of evil*[g]: however, most certainly, *the rise and root of sin is our free will and choice*[h]; it is κακὸν βλάστημα προαιρέσεως, as Cyril Hier. saith, *a bad sprout from our choice.* Men, or other intellectual and free agents, their voluntarily averting themselves from the supreme true good to inferior appearing goods; their wilfully declining from the way which God doth shew and prescribe to them; their rejecting the advices, and

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Peccatum a Deo non est, quia nec est. *Lips.*

[e] Nemo quærat efficientem causam malæ voluntatis, non enim est efficiens, sed deficiens; quia nec illa effectio est, sed defectio.

[f] Mala voluntas efficiens est operis mali, malæ autem voluntatis efficiens est nihil. *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, xii. 6, 7.

[g] Mali nulla natura est, sed amissio boni mali nomen accepit. *Aug. de C. D.* xi. 9.

[h] Ἀρχὴ καὶ ῥίζα τῆς ἁμαρτίας τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ αὐτεξούσιον. Bas. ubi supr.

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disobeying the laws of God; their thwarting the dictates of that reason which God did put in them; their abusing their natural faculties; their perverting and corrupting themselves, and others also, by ill example, persuasion, allurement, violence; these causes of such evils are most visible and palpable: we need not go far, nor rise to the top of things, to find an author, upon whom we may charge our evils; they are most truly called our *ways*, our *works*, our *imaginations*, our *inventions* and *devices*; they are the children of our affected stupidity and our naughty sloth; [i]of our precipitant choice, of our stubborn will, of our unbridled passion; they are wholly imputed to us; we are blamed, we are condemned, we are punished for them: [k]as it is horrible blasphemy to ascribe them to the most good God; so it is vain to imagine any other necessary principle, any uncreated mischievous Arimanius, any spiteful Cacodæmon, any eternal Fate, to father them upon.

Deut. iv. 16. xxxi. 29. Gen. vi. 11. Exod. xxxii. 7, &c.

The mischiefs also of pain and grief consequent upon those distempers and misdemeanours (*that unwilling brood of wilful evils*, as Damascene calls them) have very discernible originals: they are partly to be imputed to us, and partly attributed to God: we by our faults deserve and draw them to ourselves; God in justice and wisdom doth inflict them on us: *Perditio tua ex te; O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;* and, *Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves:* so

Ἐκουσίων κακῶν ἀκούσια ἔκγονα. Damasc. de Orth. F. iv. 20.

Hos. xiii. 9. Isa. iii. 9.

[i] Τὴν μοχθηρίαν ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐξουσία κυίσκει τε καὶ τελεσφορεῖ. Max. Tyr. xxv.

[k] Αἰτία ἑλομένου· θεὸς ἀναίτιος. Plato de Rep. x.

Οὐ γὰρ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, μὰ Δία, οὐκ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ. Max. Tyr.

doth God charge the cause of such evils upon us; and, *Shall there be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? Doth not evil and good proceed out of the Most High? I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil:* so God assumes the causality of them to himself. We need therefore not to inquire after any other cause of these evils, (*mala pœnæ,*) so called because they are displeasing to sense or fancy; although considering the needfulness and usefulness of them in respect to public benefit, (as they are exemplary and monitive,) and their wholesomeness for particular correction and cure, (for, *No chastening*, as the apostle saith, *for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby,*) in such respects they may rather be called good things; however, as they have any thing bad in them, they proceed from us; as they contain somewhat good, they are from God: which sufficiently confuteth those heretical opinators, and decideth the controversy; it being vain to suppose any other, beside these most apparent causes of such evils; our bad desert, and God's just providence. It is considerable, that even vice (although the worst thing in the world, and bad to the subject thereof) is yet in some respects useful; it in regard to the whole is not unprofitable; it serveth to the illustration of God's holy attributes; it is a foil to virtue, and setteth off its lustre. But let thus much suffice concerning the objects of the creation.

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Amos iii. 6. Lam. iii. 38. Isa. xlv. 7. Tertull. in Marc. 2. Heb. xii. 11.

Γίνεται καὶ ἡ κακία τοῦς κατὰ τὸν τῆς φύσεως νόμον, καὶ οὐκ ἀχρήστους πρὸς τὰ ὅλα. Chrys. apud Plut. de Stoic. contr. 31, 32. Sen. Qu. Nat. præf. et de Benef. 21. et Epist. 65.

I shall next touch a consideration or two concerning the manner how, and the reason why, God did

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make the world; which will commend to us his doing it, and intimate some grounds of duty, and both direct and excite our practice in respect thereto. The manner of God's producing the world was altogether voluntary, and absolutely free; it did not issue from him ἀπροαιρέτως, without counsel or choice, not (as some philosophers have conceited) by natural or necessary emanation or result; as heat from fire, or light from the sun, or shadow from a body; but from a wise, free choice: he so made the world, that he could wholly have abstained from making it, that he could have framed it otherwise, according to an infinite variety of ways[k]. He could not be fatally determined, there being no superior cause to guide him, or to constrain him anywise; (to do, or not to do; to do thus, or otherwise;) he could not be obliged to impart any perfection, being absolute master of all things possible, and debtor unto none upon any account[l]: it is his privilege therefore and property to perform all things κατὰ βουλὴν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ, *according to the counsel of his will*, or according to his wise pleasure, as St. Paul expresseth it; and accordingly we hear the elders in the Revelation acknowledging, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things*, καὶ διὰ τὸ θελημά σου, *and for thy will they are and were created:* they do affirm God's pleasure to be the cause of his creating things, and they imply its being so to be the ground of our due veneration, gratitude, and all devotion; these

Fecit quam optimum potuit, ait Plato in Tim.

Eph. i. 11.

Rev. iv. 11.

[k] Αἴτιον μὲν αὐτοῦ ὁμολογοῦσι τὸν Θεὸν, αἴτιον δὲ ἀπροαιρέτως, ὡς τῆς σκιᾶς τὸ σῶμα, καὶ τῆς λαμπηδόνος τὸ ἀπαυγάζον. Bas. Hexaem. α'. Οἱονεὶ ἀποσκίασμα τῆς δυνάμεως. Id.

[l] Δοῦλοι βασιλέων εἰσὶν, οἱ βασιλεῖς θεῶν, θεοὶ δ' ἀνάγκης. Philemon.

being tributes due unto free goodness and bounty: SERM. XII.
if he made all things fatally, no praise or thanks were due to him; if he doeth things so, there is no reason to offer prayers to him, to seek his aid, or implore his favour; no devotion toward him hath a ground, or can subsist. It is also evident, that if the world had been produced in way of necessary emanation, that it should have been eternal; as if the sun had been eternal, his light had been eternal also; if fire had been, its heat likewise had been from eternity: but that the world was produced in time, not long since, within six or seven thousand years, not only faith and divine chronology do assure us; but reason also shews, and all history conspires to persuade us; there being no plain monument, or probable memory of actions, beyond that time; and by what progressions mankind was propagated over the world; how, and when, and where, nations were planted, empires raised, cities built, arts invented or improved, it is not very hard to trace near the original times and places. The world therefore in respect of time conceivable by us is very young, and not many successions of ages, or lives of men, have passed between its beginning and ours; whence it plainly appears, that it was freely produced by God.

And how he produced it, the scripture further teacheth us. It was not with any laborious care or toil; not with the help of any engines or instruments subservient; not by inducing any preparatory dispositions or aptitudes, but ψιλῷ τῷ βούλεσθαι, by his mere willing, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks; his will and word were, as Tertullian expounds it, the hands, by which it is said that God made the

Adv. Hermog. 45.

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heavens; at his call they did all immediately spring up out of nothing; at his command they presently ranged themselves into order: it was not a high strain of rhetoric in Moses, as Longinus deemed, thus to describe the creation, but a most proper expression of that incomprehensible efficacy, which attends the Divine will and decree.

Long. sect. 7.

But since God did not only make the world freely, but wisely; and since all wise agents act to some purpose, and aim at some end, why (may it be inquired) did God make the world? what impulsive reason or inducement was there moving his will to do it? We may answer with Plato; ἀγαθὸς ἦν, *He was good; and he that is good doth not envy any good to any thing*[m]: his natural benignity and munificence was the pure motive that incited or invited him to this great action of communicating existence, and suitable perfection to his creatures, respectively[n]: no benefit or emolument could hence accrue to him; he could receive no accession of beatitude; he did not need any profit or pleasure from without, being full within, rich in all perfection, completely happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of himself. *Can a man*, can any creature, *be profitable to God?* No; *our goodness doth not extend to him;* we cannot anywise advance or amplify him thereby; it is because goodness is freely diffusive and communicative of itself; because love is active and fruitful in be-

Job xxii. 2.

Ps. xvi. 2.

[m] Quæris quid propositum sit Deo? Bonitas; ita certe Plato ait: Quæ Deo faciendi mundum causa fuit? Bonus est; bono nulla cujusquam boni invidia est. *Sen. Ep.* 65.

[n] Ἐποίησεν ἀγγέλους, ἀρχαγγέλους, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας τῶν ἀσωμάτων οὐσίας· ἐποίησεν δὲ δι' ἕτερον μὲν οὐδέν, δι' ἀγαθότητα δὲ μόνην, &c. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. 9. ad Stagir.

neficence; because highest excellency is void of all envy, selfishness, and tenacity, that the world was produced such as it was; those perfections being intrinsecal to God's nature, (for *God is love*, that is, essentially loving and good,) disposed him to bestow so much of being, beauty, delight, and comfort to his creatures. Hence, *The earth*, saith the Psalmist, *is full of the goodness of the Lord;* that is, every thing therein, according to its state and degree, is an effect of the Divine goodness, partakes thereof both in its being and in its enjoyments; and, *The Lord*, saith he again, *is good to all, and his tender mercies* (or his bowels of affection) *are over all his works:* he is good, and tenderly kind toward all his works, as well in producing them as preserving them; in freely rendering them capable of receiving good, as in carefully providing, and liberally dispensing good unto them; *That thou givest them* (saith the Psalmist, speaking with respect to the university of things) *they gather; thou openest thine hand, they are all filled with good:* it is from God's open hand (that is, from his unconfined bounty and liberality) that all creatures do receive all that good which fills them; which satisfieth their needs, and satiateth their desires: a glimpse of which truth the ancient pagans seem to have had, when they, as Aristotle observed, did commonly suppose Love to have been the first and chief of the Gods; the original source and framer of things[o]. But I will no longer insist on this point in way of doctrine or disquisition; I shall only adjoin a little application.

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1 John iv. 8, 16.

Ps. xxxiii. 5. cxix. 64.

Psal. cxlv. 9. רחמיו

Ps. civ. 28.

Arist. Metaph. i. 4.

[o] Πρώτιστον μὲν Ἔρωτα θεῶν μηθίσατο πάντων. Parmenides.
Ἦδ' Ἔρος, ὃς πάντεσσι μεταπρέπει ἀθανάτοισιν. Hesiod.

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1. The belief and consideration of this point (that God is the Maker of heaven and earth) must necessarily beget in us highest esteem, admiration, and adoration of God, and his divine excellencies, his power, wisdom, and goodness: for what a power must that be (how unconceivably great, both intensively and extensively, must it be!) which could so expeditely and easily rear such a stupendously vast frame! vast beyond the reach of our sense, of our imagination, of any rational collection that we can make! the earth, on which we dwell, divided into so many great empires, full of so many inhabitants, bearing such variety of creatures different in kind, having in respect to the whole but the like proportion, as a little sand hath to the earth itself, or a drop of water to the great ocean! What a wisdom must that be, how unconceivably large and penetrant, that could contrive such an innumerable number of creatures, (the artifice which appears in one, in the least of which, doth so far transcend our conceit,) could digest them so fitly, could connect them so firmly in such an order! What a goodness and benignity must it be, (how immense and boundless!) that did extend itself in affection and care, for so many creatures, abundantly providing for the need and comfort of them all! how transcendently glorious is the majesty of him, that was Author of all those beauties and strengths, those splendours and magnificencies we do with so much pleasure and so much wonder behold! Well might the devout Psalmist and divine prophet hence frequently take occasion of exciting us to praise and celebrate the perfections of God: well might even heathen philosophers from contemplation of the world be raised

into fits of composing hymns and elogies of its great Maker. SERM. XII.

2. This consideration likewise may confer to the breeding of hearty gratitude and humble affection toward God; for that we are upon many accounts very nearly and highly concerned in this great production. We ourselves, whatever we are, and all we have, and all we enjoy; all our intrinsecal endowments, and all our extrinsecal accommodations are parts thereof, and did proceed from God; yea all the whole frame was designed by him with a particular regard, and from an especial good-will unto us; was fitted for our enjoyment and use: [p]the world was made as a convenient house for us to dwell in, as a pleasant theatre for us to view, as a profitable school for our instruction, as a holy temple for us to perform offices of no less sweet than reasonable devotion; for our benefit those huge orbs roll incessantly, diffusing their glorious light, and dispensing their kindly influences; for our sake the earth is decked with all that goodly furniture, and stored with all that abundance of comfortable provisions: all these things out of pure benevolence, not being moved with any desert of ours, not regarding any profit of his own, before any desire or any thought of ours (before we were capable of

[p] Mundus quasi communis Deorum atque hominum domus, aut urbs utrorumque. *Cic. de N. D.* ii. *de Fin.* iv.

Mundus Deorum templum. *Sen. de Ben.* vii. 7. *Epist.* 90. *Cic. in Som. Scip. Philo. de Mun.* 2, &c.

Ψυχῶν παιδευτήριον, καὶ διδασκαλεῖον, &c. Bas. M.

—οὐ πόνων ἀμοιβὴν ἔδωκεν, οὐ δὲ κατορθωμάτων ἀντίδοσιν, &c. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ζ'.

Cogitavit nos ante natura quam genuit, &c. *Sen. de Benef.* ii. 23.

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wishing or thinking) God was pleased to contrive, and to accomplish for us. *We*, said a philosopher, *regard and esteem ourselves overmuch, if we think ourselves worthy, that so great matters should be agitated for our sake*[q]: and the Psalmist signifies the same, when, upon contemplation of the world, he saith, *When I consider the heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?* That the Author of so great and glorious a work should vouchsafe to regard so mean things as us, to visit us continually with a provident inspection and care over our welfare, to lay so vast projects, and accomplish so mighty works in regard to us; what a demonstration of admirable condescension, what a ground of wonder and astonishment, what an argument of love and thankfulness toward God is this!

Psal. viii.

3. Yea what a ground and motive to humility should this consideration be unto us! What is man? what, I say, is man, in comparison to him that made the world? what is our strength, what our wit, what our goodness, what any quality or ability of ours, in respect to the perfection of those things in him? how weak, silly, narrow, poor, and wretched things must we needs appear to ourselves, when seriously we consider the immense excellencies displayed in the world's creation! how should this depress and debase us in our conceits about ourselves! Especially if we reflect upon our own unprofitableness, our ingratitude, and our injustice toward our Creator; how none, or how scant returns we have made to him,

[q] Nimis nos suspicimus, si digni nobis videmur, propter quos tanta moveantur. *Sen. de Ira*, 27.

who gave unto us, and to all things for us, our being and theirs, our all and theirs; how faint in our acknowledgments, how negligent in our services we have been; yea how preposterously, instead of our due homage and tribute, we have repaid him affronts and injuries; frequently opposing his will and abusing his goodness! SERM. XII.

4. This consideration is further a proper inducement unto trust and hope in God; and withal a fit ground of consolation to us in all our needs and distresses. He that was able to do so great things, and hath been willing to do so much for us; he that having made all things, can dispose of all, and *doeth* (as king Nebuchadnezzar, taught by experience, confessed) *according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?* how can we distrust his protection or succour in our exigencies? This consideration good men have been wont to apply to such purposes: *My help*, saith the Psalmist, *cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth:* well might he be assured, having so potent and faithful an aid: and, *Happy*, saith he again, *is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help; whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth; the sea, and all that therein is:* happy indeed he surely is; no disappointment or disaster can befall him, who doth with reason confide in him that made the world, and can manage it to his advantage. The prophet Jeremiah begins his prayer thus: *O Lord God, behold thou hast made heaven and earth by thy great power and stretched out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee.* The creation of the

Dan. iv. 35.

Psal. cxxi. 2. cxxiv. 8. cxlvi. 5.

Jer. xxxii. 17.

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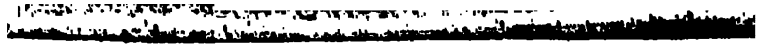
world is such an experiment of God's power and goodness, as may support our faith in all encounters; so that we should not think any thing so difficult, but that God is able, nor so high, but that God is willing to perform it for us, if it make toward our real good.

5. Finally, This consideration ministereth a general incitement unto all obedience; which from God's production of all things doth appear, upon several accounts, due and reasonable: all other things do constantly obey the law imposed on them, insist in the course defined to them; and shall we only be disobedient and refractory, irregular and exorbitant? shall all the hosts of heaven most readily and punctually obey God's summons? shall *the pillars of heaven tremble, and be astonished at his reproof?* shall *the sea* with *its proud waves* be curbed and confined by his decree? shall *fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy winds,* (such rude and boisterous things,) *fulfil his word?* as they are all said to do; and shall we be unruly and rebellious? we, who are placed in the top of nature, for whom all nature was made, to whom all nature serves; shall we only, of all things in nature, transgress against the Author and Governor of nature?

Isa. xlviii. 13. xl. 26. Job ix. 5. xxvi. 11. xxxviii. 1. Jer. v. 21. Ps. xlviii. 8.

But I leave the further improvement of this grand point to your meditation, concluding with the exhortation of that angel in the Apocalypse: *Fear God, and give glory to him; worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water:* even to him be all obedience, and adoration, and praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Rev. xiv. 7.

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